

**THE
PROVERBS OF SOLOMON.**

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THE
PROVERBS OF SOLOMON,

TRANSLATED FROM THE HEBREW TEXT,

WITH NOTES, CRITICAL AND EXPLANATORY,

BY

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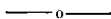
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THE  
PROVERBS OF SOLOMON.



# P R E F A C E.



In sending forth a new version of the Book of Proverbs, the translator desires to make the English reader better able to understand the Divine original than he is from the authorised version, and to put him, at least in some degree, in the position of one able to read the Hebrew text.

No translation, however good, can fully express the meaning of the original, or shew the beauties of its composition; therefore some notes are needed to enable the reader to understand and appreciate these beauties.

The translator has spared no pains in consulting the ablest commentators within his reach—Jewish and Christian, English and Foreign.

He has also searched the Talmud for information on some portions of the text. Several various readings of note, not known to any Biblical critic, have thus been discovered, which, it is hoped, may prove both interesting and instructive to the reader.

He begs also to acknowledge his particular obligations to Mr. T. W. Cox, from whom he has received much assistance in preparing the work for the press.

A. E.

24, Belgrave Street,  
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# THE PROVERBS.

## CHAPTER I.

### INTRODUCTION.

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1. THE Proverbs of Solomon, son of David, King of Israel ;

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2. From which a man may learn wisdom and instruction ;  
From which he may discern the words of understanding ;

3. From which he may receive the instruction of prudence ;

In righteousness, in equity, and in rectitude ;

4. Which will give subtilty to the undesigning ;  
To the young man perception and resolution.

5. Let a wise man attend, he will increase his learning ;  
A man of understanding will acquire good directions ;

6. So as to unriddle the parable and its interpretation—  
The expressions of the wise and their enigmas.

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7. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge ;  
Wisdom and instruction fools despise.

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Verse 1.—This verse is to be considered as the title, with the Author's name and quality. The word "Proverbs" means maxims and observations.

2.—In this and the four following verses, Solomon explains the scope and design of the book of Proverbs. The verses 2—4 specify the subject treated of, under three general heads. The verses 5 & 6 bespeak the attention to them.

3.—"For understanding the words of the intelligent." BOOTHROYD.

4.—"For giving prudence to the simple." EICHEL.—BOOTHROYD translates in the same manner.

7.—This verse is the *motto* to the book of Proverbs.—Wisdom cannot be attained unless the mind be impressed with a reverential fear of God. "Where there is no wisdom there is no reverence of God, and where there is no reverence of God, there is no wisdom." FIRKE ABOTH (Ethics of the fathers) ch. iii, Mishna 21.

8. Hearken, my son, to the instruction of thy father,  
And neglect not the lessons of thy mother;
9. For they shall be a graceful ornament to thy head,  
And chains around thy neck.
10. My son, if sinners entice thee, consent thou not.
11. If they say: "Come with us, let us lie in wait for blood,  
"Without cause, let us watch secretly for the innocent;
12. "Let us as the grave, swallow them up alive,  
"And whole, like those who descend into the pit;
13. "We shall find much precious substance,  
"We shall fill our houses with spoil;
14. "Cast in thy lot among us,  
"We will all have one purse."
15. Oh, go not with them in their way, my son!  
Refrain thy foot from their path.
16. For their feet run to evil,  
And haste to shed blood.
17. Surely it is in vain that any bird seeth  
The spreading of the net;
18. Although they lay in wait for its blood,  
And watch secretly for its life;
19. So is it with him that is covetous of unjust gain;  
It taketh the life of its possessor.

8.—With this verse the *Book of Proverbs* begins, though the "Proverbs" only begin with the tenth chapter.—

My son.—Hebrew teachers were accustomed to address their Scholars in these affectionate terms.

10.—BOOTHROYD proposes to divide v. v. 10 and 11 into four lines, and the translation to run thus:

- "My son, if sinners entice thee—  
"Consent thou not when they say:—  
"Come with us, let us wait for blood—  
"Let us lurk for those, who in vain are innocent."

There is no need for such an alteration.

12.—Perhaps allusion is here made to NUMB. xvi. v. 32.

17.—The adverb "*Chinnam*," *in vain*, may refer either to the *bird* or to the *fowler*, but from what Solomon himself says (CHAP. vii, v. 23,) we are inclined to apply it to the BIRD.

19.—Such are the ways of all greedy of lucre; it *seduceth* the soul of those subject to it.—HODGSON.

20. Wisdom crieth publicly,  
In the streets she uttereth her voice ;
21. In the principal places of concourse she calleth aloud,  
At the entrances of the gates ;  
Throughout the city she proclaimeth her words :
- [saying]
22. "How long, ye simple ones, will ye love simplicity ?  
"How long will ye scoffers delight in scoffing,  
"And ye fools hate knowledge ?
23. "Turn ye at my rebuke !  
"Behold, I will pour forth my spirit upon you,  
"I will enable you to understand my words !
24. "Because I have called aloud, and ye have refused—  
"I have stretched out my hand, and no one hath  
attended ;
25. "But ye have rejected all my counsel,  
"And have slighted my rebuke ;
26. "I also will laugh, when ye fall into calamity,  
"I will deride when fear cometh upon you—
27. "When fear cometh upon you like a desolation,  
"And calamity overtaketh you as a whirlwind—  
"When distress and anguish come upon you.
28. "Then they will call upon me, but I will not answer,  
"They will seek me early, but they shall not find me !
29. "Because they have hated knowledge,  
"And have not chosen the fear of the Lord—
30. "They have slighted my counsel—  
"They have contemned all my rebuke ;
31. "Therefore shall they eat of the fruit of their own way,  
"And be filled with their own devices.
32. "For the haughtiness of the simple shall destroy them,  
"And the recklessness of fools shall cause them to  
perish ;

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20.—The *plural* in the original is improper.

21.—"Amidst the noisy throng she crieth out." BOOTHROYD.

31.—*They shall eat.*—They shall meet with that punishment which their wickedness deserves.

And be filled.—They shall have ample cause to loathe the evil courses in which they have been engaged.

33. "But he who hearkeneth unto me, shall dwell safely,
 "And shall be quiet from the fear of evil."

CHAPTER II.

1. My son, if thou wilt receive my words,
 And treasure up my commandments within thee—
2. If thou wilt incline thine ear unto wisdom—
 If thou wilt apply thy heart to understanding ;
3. Yea, if thou wilt cry unto understanding ;
 If thou wilt raise thy voice unto knowledge—
4. If thou wilt seek her as silver,
 And search for her as for hidden treasures ;
5. Then shalt thou understand what is the fear of the
 Lord,
 And attain unto the knowledge of God.
6. For the Lord giveth wisdom ;
 From his mouth proceed knowledge and understanding.
7. He treasureth up sound wisdom for the upright,
 He is a shield to those who walk in integrity ;
8. He preserveth the paths of equity,
 And He guardeth the way of his saints.
9. Then shalt thou understand righteousness, equity,
 And rectitude, yea, every good path.
10. Truly, wisdom will enter into thy heart,
 And knowledge will be delightful to thy soul.
11. Discretion will guard thee,
 Understanding will preserve thee ;
12. To rescue thee from the way of the wicked—
 From the men who speak perverse things—
13. Who abandon the paths of rectitude—
 To walk in the ways of darkness—
14. Who rejoice in doing evil—
 Who delight in the perverseness of the wicked—
15. Whose paths are crooked,
 And who are froward in their ways.

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 32.—*And the recklessness.*—"And the security." GREY.  
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- 3.—*If thou wilt cry.*—Earnestly imploring its aim and direction.
- 4.—*Seek her.*—With assiduity and diligence.
- 8.—*The paths of equity.*—Those who walk in the paths of equity.
- 6.—This and the following two verses are introduced parenthetically.

16. To rescue thee from the strange woman—
From the stranger, who allureth with her smooth words;
17. Who abandoneth the companion of her youth,
And has forgotten the covenant of her God.
18. For her house leadeth down unto death,
And her paths unto the dead.
19. None return who enter it,
Nor revisit the paths of life.
20. Therefore walk thou in the way of good men,
And keep the paths of the righteous.
21. For the upright shall dwell in the land,
And the perfect shall remain in it ;
22. But the wicked shall be cut off from the land,
And transgressors shall be utterly rooted out of it.

CHAPTER III.

1. My son, forget not my teaching,
But let thy heart observe my commandments.
2. (For length of days, and years of happiness,
And prosperity shall they add unto thee.
3. Loving-kindness and truth shall not forsake thee.)
Bind them around thy neck,
Write them upon the tablet of thy heart ;
4. Then shalt thou find favour,
And a good understanding,
In the sight of God and man.
5. Trust in the Lord with all thy heart,
And lean not upon thine own understanding.
6. In all thy ways acknowledge Him,

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 16.—*Strange woman*.—Women of profligate and abandoned character amongst the Jews, were for the most part “strangers,” belonging to one or other of the neighbouring heathen nations ; whence this term was afterwards retained to designate such persons, even though they might be, as in the present instance, (see verse 17) of Hebrew origin.

17.—*The companion*.—Her husband, to whom she has—while young—been united.

19.—The affix in the original may refer either to *the woman* or to *the house*, but the latter is preferable.

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 2.—*For length of days*.—

This and the two following lines are introduced parenthetically..

- And He will make thy paths plain.
7. Be not wise in thine own sight;
Fear the Lord, and depart from evil.
 8. It shall be fertility to thy waist,
And moisture to thy bones.
 9. Honour the Lord out of thy substance,
And of the first-fruits of all thy produce;
 10. So shall thy barns be well filled,
And thy vats overflow with new wine.
 11. My son, despise not the correction of the Lord,
Nor be impatient under His chastisement;
 12. For the Lord chasteneth him whom He loveth,
Even as a father the son in whom he delighteth.
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13. Happy is the man who attaineth unto wisdom,
And the man who diffuseth understanding.
 14. For her merchandise is better than the merchandise
of silver,
And her produce better than fine gold,
 15. More precious is she than pearls,
No objects of thy delight are to be compared with her.
 16. Length of days is in her right hand;
In her left hand riches and honour.
 17. Her ways are ways of pleasantness,
And all her paths are peace.
 18. She is a tree of life to those who lay hold on her,
And happy are they who retain her.
 19. The Lord by wisdom laid the foundations of the earth;
He framed the heavens by understanding.
 20. By His knowledge the depths burst forth,
And the clouds drop dew.
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8.—“It shall be fertility to thy *waist*, and marrow to thy bones.”

“The common rendering of the term “*sharar*” is *navel*; but incapable of eliciting any meaning from such a phraseology, our modern critics have suspected an error in the Hebrew term, and that the royal moralist originally wrote “*libesareka*” to thy *flesh*, an alteration not supported, I believe, by any ancient print or manuscript.”—JOHN MASON GOOD.

The reading of the Talmud is the same as in the Bible: “*leshareka*.”

14.—Or: “For her traffic is more profitable than the traffic of silver.”

21. My son, let them not depart from thine eyes :
Keep sound wisdom and discretion.
22. They shall be life to thy soul,
And grace to thy neck.
23. Then shalt thou go on thy way safely,
And thy foot shall not stumble ;
24. When thou liest down, thou shalt not fear,
Thou shalt lie down, and thy sleep shall be sweet ;
25. Thou shalt not fear sudden alarm,
Nor the desolation of the wicked when it cometh ;
26. For the Lord shall be thy confidence,
And He will keep thy foot from being taken.
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27. Do not withhold kindness from those who are in
need of it,
When thou hast the power to do it.
28. Say not to thy neighbour, " Go, and come again,
And to-morrow I will give," when thou hast the means.
29. Devise not evil against thy neighbour,
Seeing he liveth trustfully near thee.
30. Contend not with a man without cause,
When he has done thee no harm.
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31. Envy thou not the man of violence,
Nor chose any of his ways.
32. For the froward man is an abomination to the Lord,
But with the upright he hath communion.
33. The curse of the Lord is upon the house of the
wicked ;
But the dwelling of the righteous He blesseth.
34. The scoffers He treateth scornfully,
But unto the meek He giveth grace.
35. The wise shall possess honour,
But fools shall decay in disgrace.
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26.—The Talmudists explain this verse : " God will be with thee, even in thy simplest pursuit after wisdom."—Jerusalem Talmud, Peah, ch. I.

27.—" If thou seest that thy friend wishes to do good, prevent him not, if thou hast the power to do so."—JARCHI.

34.—" If a man go with scoffers, he becometh a scoffer ; but if he connect himself with the meek, his deeds will cause him to find grace in the sight of men."—JARCHI.

CHAPTER IV.

1. Hearken ye children, to the instruction of a father,
And attend, that ye may learn understanding.
2. For I give you good doctrine,
Forsake ye not my teaching.
3. When I was a tender child of my father,
Beloved as an only son of my mother ;
4. He taught me and said to me : "let thy heart
retain my words ;
"Keep my commandments and thou shalt live.
5. "Acquire wisdom, acquire understanding ;
"Forget not, nor swerve from the words of my mouth.
6. "Forsake her not, and she will guard thee ;
"Love her, and she will preserve thee.
7. "The chief thing of all is wisdom ; acquire wisdom,
"And above all acquisitions, acquire understanding.
8. "Exalt her, and she will promote thee ;
"She will bring thee to honour, if thou embrace her.
9. "She will give to thy head a graceful ornament ;
"A crown of glory she will deliver to thee.
10. "Hearken, my son, and receive my words ;
"So shall the years of thy life be multiplied.
11. "In the way of wisdom I have instructed thee ;
"I have led thee into the paths of rectitude.
12. "When thou walkest, thy steps shall not be hindered,
"And when thou runnest, thou shalt not stumble.
13. "Lay firm hold on instruction, relax not ;
"Keep her, for she is thy life.
14. "Enter not into the path of the wicked,
"Nor go forward in the way of evil men.
15. "Avoid it, pass not into it ;
"Turn from it, and go away.
16. "For they cannot sleep unless they have done evil ;
"Their sleep is taken away, unless they cause men
to stumble.

4.—Solomon calls here the attention of those whom he addresses, to instructions which had been delivered to him by his father David.

These instructions commence at the fourth verse of this chapter, and end at the sixth verse of Chapter V.

17. "For they eat the bread of wickedness,
"And drink the wine of violence.
18. "The path of the righteous is as the light of dawn,
"Which brighteneth more and more, till it is perfect day.
19. "The way of the wicked is as thick darkness;
"They perceive not that against which they stumble.
20. "My son, attend unto my words,
"Incline thine ear unto my sayings.
21. "Let them not depart from thine eyes,
"Keep them within thy heart.
22. "For they are life to him who findeth them,
"And soundness to all his flesh.
23. "Keep thy heart with all diligence;
"For life goeth forth from it.
24. "Put away from thee frowardness of mouth,
"And perverseness of lips remove far from thee.
25. "Let thine eye look straight forward,
"And thine eye-lids be directed before thee.
26. "Weigh well the path of thy foot,
"And all thy ways shall be established.
27. "Turn not to the right hand nor to the left,
"Remove thy foot from evil.

CHAPTER V.

1. "My son, attend unto my wisdom,
"Incline thine ear to my arguments;
2. "That thou mayest keep discretion,
"And thy lips may preserve knowledge.
3. "Truly, the lips of a strange woman drop honey,

18.—"The path of the righteous is as moonlight, which shineth forth until it is perfect day." The *moon* is called "Nogah" because she receives her light from the sun. EICHEL.

25.—*Let thine eye look.*—Be continually on thy guard against the seductions of the wicked.

27.—The Sept., Vulg., and Arab. add: "For God knoweth the right paths on the right hand, but those on the left hand are perverted; but he shall make thy steps straight, and advance thy steps in peace." But this addition is not supported by any Hebrew M.S.

2.—*Preserve knowledge.*—The Sept. and Vulg. add: "Attend not to a wicked woman." This addition is not supported by any Hebrew M.S.

- “And her mouth is smoother than oil;
 4. “But her end is bitter as wormwood,
 “Sharp as a two-edged sword.
 5. “Her feet go down unto death,
 “Her steps lay hold on the grave.
 6. “She weigheth not the path of life,
 “Her tracks are devious; thou canst not know them.”

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7. Now therefore, ye children, hearken unto me,
 And depart not from the words of my mouth.
 8. Remove thy way far from her,
 And approach not the door of her house.
 9. Lest thou give thine honour unto others,
 And thy years unto the cruel;
 10. Lest strangers be filled with thy strength,
 And thy toils remain in the house of the alien;
 11. And afterwards thou shouldest moan,
 When thy flesh and thy body are consumed;
 12. And shouldest say: “How have I hated instruction!
 “And how hath my heart contemned rebuke!
 13. “I have not hearkened to the voice of my teachers,
 “Nor inclined mine ear to mine instructors!
 14. “I was well nigh in all evil,
 “In the midst of the congregation and the assembly.”
 15. Drink water out of thine own cistern,
 And running waters from thine own well.
 16. Then shall thy fountains be dispersed abroad,
 As streams of water in the streets.

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5.—*On the grave.*—The word *sheol* here used denotes the unseen world. The Hebrew term for “grave” is *Keber*.

9.—*Unto the cruel.*—“The prince of hell.” Jarchi.—“The angel of death.” The Midrash.

14.—“*As a criminal* have I been arraigned for every kind of offence, before the tribunal and before the assembly.” HODGSON.

15.—*Drink water.*—This verse conveys, in a figurative language, an exhortation to keep the marriage bed pure and undefiled.

16.—*Thy fountains.*—The figurative language describes the prosperity of a family. ABEN EZRA interprets it of children which proceed from their parents as streams from a fountain, and which may be said to be *dispersed abroad* by their connection with other families.

17. They shall be thine only,  
And not strangers' with thee ;
18. Thy well shall be blessed,  
Thou shalt have joy in the wife of thy youth.
19. A lovely hind, a graceful roe,  
Her breasts shall yield thee plenteous delight at  
all times,  
Thou shalt rove continually in her love.
20. Why then, my son, wilt thou rove after a strange  
woman,  
And embrace the bosom of a stranger ?
21. For the ways of a man are before the eyes of the Lord,  
And He weigheth all his paths.
22. His own iniquities shall take the wicked captive,  
He shall be held fast by the cords of his sin.
23. In his great folly he shall go astray,  
He shall die without instruction.

## CHAPTER VI.

1. My son, if thou hast become surety for thy neighbour,  
If thou hast stricken hands for a stranger ;
2. If thou art ensnared by the words of thy mouth,  
If thou art caught by the words of thy mouth ;
3. Do this then, my son, rescue thyself ;  
For thou hast fallen into the hand of thy neighbour ;  
Go, humble thyself and be urgent with thy neighbour.
4. Allow not sleep to thine eyes,  
Nor slumber to thine eye-lids.
5. Rescue thyself as the gazelle from the snare,  
And as a bird from the snare of the fowler.
6. Go unto the ant, thou sluggard,  
Observe her ways, and be wise.

18.—*Thy well*.—Thy wife shall be fruitful.

20.—*Strange woman*—*Stranger*.—See note CHAP. II., v. 16.

- 6.—“ Thus little ant, (to human lore  
“ No mean example) forms her frugal store,  
“ Gather'd with mighty toils on every side,  
“ Nor ignorant, nor careless to provide  
“ For future want ”—HORACE. Sat. I., lib. I.

7. She hath no governor,  
Nor overseer, nor ruler ;
  8. Yet she prepareth in the summer her food,  
She gathereth in the harvest her meat.
  9. How long, O sluggard, wilt thou lie down ?  
When wilt thou arise from thy sleep ?
  10. "A little sleep"—"a little slumber"—  
"A little folding of the hands to rest"—
  11. So shall poverty come upon thee as an invader,  
And want, as an armed man !  
.....
  12. A worthless man, a man of iniquity,  
Speaketh constantly perverse things.
  13. He winketh with his eyes,  
He scratcheth with his feet,  
He pointeth with his fingers.
  14. Perverseness is in his heart,  
He contriveth mischief continually,  
He spreadeth contentions,
  15. Therefore shall calamity come upon him suddenly,  
In a moment shall he be crushed without remedy.  
.....
  16. These six things the Lord hateth ;  
Yea, seven are an abomination to Him.
  17. Haughty eyes, a false tongue,  
And hands which shed innocent blood ;
  18. A heart which contriveth wicked devices,  
Feet which hasten to run after mischief ;
  19. A false witness who breatheth forth lies,  
And he that spreadeth contentions amongst brethren.
  20. Observe, my son, the commandment of thy father,  
And neglect not the teaching of thy mother.
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8.—The Sept. and Arab. add :

"Or go to the bee, and learn what a worker she is, and how seriously she performs her work, to the labours of which both Kings and subjects apply themselves, as far as health permits, and to all it is agreeable and honourable, and though her strength be small, having honoured wisdom, she is diligently employed." This addition is not supported by any Hebrew M.S.

10.—*A little sleep.*—Solomon introduces here the expostulation of a sluggard, when called upon to leave his bed.

21. Bind them continually to thy heart,  
Tie them around thy neck.
22. When thou walkest about, they shall guide thee,  
When thou liest down, they shall watch over thee,  
And when thou awakest, they shall commune with thee,
23. For his commandment is a lamp, and her teaching  
a light ;  
The rebukes of correction lead unto life ;
24. To guard thee against the profligate woman ;  
Against the flattering tongue of the stranger.
25. Desire not her beauty in thy heart,  
Nor let her captivate thee with her eye-lids.
26. For the harlot bringeth to a morsel of bread,  
The adulteress ensnareth the precious life.
27. Can a man put fire in his bosom,  
And yet his garments not be burned ?
28. Can a man walk upon burning coals,  
And yet his feet not be scorched ?
29. So it is with him that goeth unto his neighbour's wife,  
No one who toucheth her shall be held guiltless.
30. Men do not despise the thief who stealeth  
To satisfy his appetite, because he is hungry.

22.—*Walkest about—liest down—awakest.*—Under these terms are included all the various circumstances of life.—The Talmudists say : *when thou walkest about*, i.e., during thy lifetime ; *when thou liest down*, i.e., in the grave ; *when thou awakest*, i.e., at the resurrection of the dead.—

*They.*—The commandment and the teaching.

25.—*With her eye-lids.*—It was the custom to paint them, with the view of increasing personal attraction.—See II. KINGS ix, v. 30.—JER. iv, v. 30, and EZEK. xxiii, v. 40.

26.—By the law, the sin of *fornication* was not capital, but that of *adultery*, subjected both the adulterer and the adulteress to death.—

I have followed the opinions of Jarchi and Aben Ezra.

EICHEL does not agree with them ; he translates “*Esheth ish*” *treue Gattin, wife*, for the term is used in the Bible only in this sense ; though in the Talmud it is used for an *adulteress*.

27.—In this and the following verses we have the *masculine noun* plural with the *feminine verb*.

31. But, when discovered, he repayeth sevenfold,  
He giveth even all the substance of his house.
32. The adulterer is void of understanding;  
He that will destroy his own life, let him do this!
33. Stripes and dishonour shall he receive,  
And his reproach shall not be blotted out;
34. For the jealousy of an husband is furious,  
And he will shew no mercy in the day of vengeance.
35. He will not pay regard to any ransom,  
Nor consent, although thou shouldest offer many bribes.

## CHAPTER VII.

1. My son, keep my words,  
And treasure up my commandments within thee.
2. Keep my commandments and thou shalt live;  
And my teaching as the pupil of thine eye.
3. Bind them upon thy fingers,  
Write them upon the tablet of thy heart.
4. Say unto wisdom: "Thou art my sister;"  
And call understanding "Kinswoman."
5. That they may guard thee against the strange woman,  
Against the stranger who allureth with her smooth words.
6. For, through the window of my house,  
By means of my lattice I looked forth;

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31.—*But when discovered.*—The adulterer. Nearly all the versions and commentators apply this verse to the *thief*. But, I would ask, how could a *starving man* repay *sevenfold*, or *give all the substance of his house*? and, if he who steals from necessity be *not despised*, why should he be punished?

I am of opinion, that this verse is immediately connected with verse 29, and therefore refers to the *adulterer*, as though Solomon would say, that, whilst men have compassion on the thief who steals from necessity, no pity is shown to the adulterer, who, when caught, will pay anything, that his deeds may not come to light.

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1.—The Sept. and Arab. add: "My son, honour the Lord, and "thou shalt be strong, but beside Him fear no other." This addition is not supported by any Hebrew M.S.

7. And I saw, amongst the simple ones,  
I observed amongst the youths,  
A young man void of understanding,
8. Passing through the street near her corner,  
He was going the way to her house ;
9. In the twilight, at the close of the day,  
In the evening's gloom, in the darkness.
10. And behold, a woman met him,  
In the attire of a harlot, and subtle of heart ;
11. (She is noisy and refractory,  
Her feet abide not at home,
12. Now she is at the door, now in the streets,  
Lurking near every corner.)
13. She caught hold of him and kissed him ;  
With an impudent face she said unto him :
14. "Peace offerings have I bound myself to pay,  
"This day I have performed my vows.
15. "Therefore came I forth to meet thee,  
"Earnestly to seek thy face, and I have found thee !
16. "I have spread my bed with coverings,  
"With embroidered fine linen of Egypt ;
17. "I have perfumed my bed  
"With myrrh, aloes, and cinnamon ;
18. "Come, let us intoxicate ourselves with love,  
"Till the morning let us indulge in caresses ;
19. "For the master is not at home,  
"He is gone a distant journey.



10.—*In the attire.*—So the Targum.

*And subtle.*—"Which maketh the heart (of young men) to flee away."—Sept. and Arab.—They read : *Venotsetseth*, but no Hebrew M.S. has this reading.

11.—This and the following verse are introduced parenthetically.

14.—Eichel differs from nearly all the commentators. He translates :  
"Truly, I must bring to-day a peace-offering ! my wish is fulfilled.

15.—"For I only went out to meet—to invite thee, and behold !  
"here thou art."

19.—*The Master.*—It is more consistent with the character of an adulteress, that she should speak disrespectfully of her husband, than that she should call him *my husband*, as the Sept. and Arab. translate.

20. "He hath taken a purse of money with him,  
"He will return at the appointed day."
21. By her many enticing words, she beguileth him;  
By the smooth allurements of her lips, she  
seduceth him.
22. He followeth her straightway,  
As an ox goeth to the slaughter;  
She is the chain which fettereth the fool,
23. Until her arrow pierceth his liver.  
As a bird hasteneth into the snare,  
And perceiveth not that it is laid for its life.
24. Now therefore, ye children, hearken unto me,  
And attend to the words of my mouth:
25. Let not thy heart swerve into her ways,  
Go not astray into her paths.
26. For she hath caused many to fall, mortally wounded;  
Countless is the number of those slain by her!
27. Her house is the way to the grave,  
Leading down to the chambers of death.

## CHAPTER VIII.

1. Doth not wisdom call aloud?  
And understanding utter her voice?



20.—*At the appointed day.*—According to some commentators, "New Year," according to others, "New Moon." Perhaps she refers to one of the three great Festivals at which he was obliged to be present.

22.—These verses have been variously explained. Dr. Hunt would alter the Hebrew text which reads "El" *to*, into "Ayil" *a hart*, and take the noun "Ekhes" *chain*, as a verb: *to leap, skip, or bound*. He translates thus:

22.—"He goeth after her straightway,

"As an ox goeth to the slaughter;

23.—"Or as an hart boundeth into the toils,

"Till a dart strike through his liver;

24.—"As a bird hasteth to the snare,

"And knoweth not that it is for his life."

26.—"For she has thrown down many soldiers,

"And her slain are all mighty men."—KENNICOTT.

27.—*Grave.*—See note, Chap. V., v. 5.

2. Upon the top of the high places,  
By the way-side, in the broad paths,  
She taketh her station.
3. By the side of the gates, in the avenues of the city,  
In the approaches of its entrances, she crieth aloud :  
[Saying]
4. "To you O men, I call,  
"And my voice is to the sons of men.
5. "O, ye simple ones, discern prudence,  
"And ye fools, be ye of a discerning heart.
6. "Hear, for I speak excellent things,  
"The opening of my lips is of rectitude.
7. "For my mouth uttereth truth,  
"And my lips abominate wickedness ;
8. "All the words of my mouth are perfect ;  
"None of them are intricate and crooked.
9. "They are all plain to him that understandeth,  
"And evident to those who attain unto knowledge.
10. "Receive my instruction rather than silver,  
"And knowledge rather than choice gold.
11. "For wisdom is better than pearls,  
"No objects of delight can be compared to her.
12. "I, wisdom, penetrate into deceit,  
"And find out secret designs.
13. "The fear of the Lord is to abhor evil,  
"Pride, arrogance, the way of evil,  
"And the perverse mouth do I abhor.

3.—*By the side of the gates.*—Where the greatest concourse of people was.

7.—*Wickedness*, "Rescha."—All the versions read : "Sheker," *falsehood*. The parallelism requires such a reading, for *falsehood* not *wickedness* is opposed to truth. Eichel also translates : *untruth*.

10.—"Receive my instruction without money." DURELL

13.—"Wisdom, which is here personified, speaks in the preceding verse in the first person, so likewise in this verse, and throughout the remainder of the Chapter. The religious precept before us (though worthy to be inculcated) must therefore appear to be here unreasonable. I would thus translate : "I fear the Lord, I hate the evil of pride and arrogance ; both the wicked path and the perverted mouth do I hate." DURELL.

14. "Counsel and sound wisdom are mine ;  
"I am understanding, to me belongeth might.
15. "By me kings reign,  
"And princes decree justice.
16. "By me rulers govern, and nobles,  
"Yea, all the judges of the earth.
17. "I love those that love me,  
"And they that seek me early, shall find me.
18. "Riches and honour are with me,  
"Enduring substance and happiness.
19. "My fruit is better than gold, yea, than fine gold,  
"And my revenue better than choice silver.
20. "I walk in the way of righteousness,  
"In the broad paths of equity ;
21. "To make those who love me, to possess substance ;  
"I fill all their treasures.
22. "The Lord possessed me in the beginning of His way,  
"Before His works, which were of old.
23. "I have been set up from everlasting,  
"From the beginning, before the earth was made.
24. "When there were no deeps, I was brought forth ;  
"When there were no springs abounding with water.
25. "Before the mountains were settled,  
"Before the hills I was brought forth.
26. "Ere He had made the earth and space,  
"Yea, the first atom of the dust of the world ;
27. "When He framed the heavens I was there,  
"When He set a compass upon the face of the deep ;
28. "When He made firm the clouds above,  
"When He strengthened the fountains of the deep ;



14.—*I am understanding.*—I prefer the reading of the versions: "understanding is mine." HOUBIGANT.

21.—*Substance.*—The Targum reads *years*, the Arab. *inheritance*.

22.—"If I shall have shown you the things that are done every day, I will remember to recount the things done from eternity," added by the Sept., but not supported by any Hebrew M.S.

23.—*Set up.*—I have been invested with sovereignty from everlasting.

26.—*Earth and space.*—By this we understand the entire universe.

29. "When He appointed to the sea its bounds,  
"That the water should not pass its shore,  
"When He fixed the foundations of the earth.
30. "I was close to Him, His companion;  
"I was His delight day by day;  
"Playing, in his presence, continually;
31. "Playing in the world, His earth;  
"And my delight was in the sons of men.
32. "Now therefore, children, hear me,  
"For happy are they that keep my ways.
33. "Hear instruction and be wise,  
"Reject it not.
34. "Happy is the man who heareth me,  
"Who watcheth at my gates day by day;  
"Who keepeth guard at my door-posts.
35. "For he who attaineth me, attaineth life,  
"And shall receive favour from the Lord.
36. "But he who misseth me, doeth violence to himself;  
"All they that hate me, love death."

## CHAPTER IX.

1. Wisdom hath builded her house,  
She hath hewn out her seven pillars.
2. She hath killed her fatlings,  
She hath mingled her wine;  
She hath also furnished her table.
3. She hath sent forth her maidens;  
She calleth aloud from a lofty seat,  
Upon the high places of the city:

31.—I have followed here the opinion of Aben Ezra.

1.—*Wisdom*.—The Hebrew is literally *wisdoms*. The construction in the original seems to require the singular.

*Hewn out*.—"Founded it on seven pillars." FICHEL.

*Seven pillars*.—The Talmudists apply this expression to the *seven portions* into which they say the law is divided. To make these seven portions, they divide the Book of Numbers in three. The first portion ends with Chap. x., verse 34. Verses 35 and 36 form the second portion, and from verse 37 until the end of the Book the third portion.—Shabbath fol. 116.

2.—This address seems opposed to the allurements of the adulteress, Chap. vii., v. 14.

4. "Whoever is simple, let him turn and come hither!"  
Unto the man void of understanding, she saith:
5. "Come, eat of my bread,  
"And drink of the wine which I have mingled.
6. "Forsake [your way], ye simple ones, and ye shall live,  
"Go straight forward in the way of understanding.  
.....
7. He who correcteth a scorner, bringeth disgrace upon himself;  
And he who rebuketh the wicked, [heareth] his own faults.
8. Rebuke not a scorner, lest he hate thee;  
Rebuke a wise man, and he will love thee.
9. Instruct a wise man, and he will be yet wiser;  
Teach a just man, and he will increase in learning.
10. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom,  
And the knowledge of the Most Holy is understanding.  
.....
11. "For by me, thy days shall be multiplied,  
"And years of happiness shall be added to thee.
12. "If thou art wise, thou art wise for thyself;  
"And if thou scornest, thou alone shall bear [the punishment]."

4.—"This verse breaks the connection, and there can be no doubt it is improperly inserted here. It is repeated verse 16, where it is evidently proper." BOOTHROYD.

8.—The sacred writer is far from meaning to assert, that it is a matter of little consequence whether scoffers be reclaimed from their evil course, or that no hazard is to be run in endeavouring to effect this most desirable end.

He merely states the results of his experience, that wicked persons, will not only refuse to listen to the voice of admonition, but heap upon such, as presume to offer it, reproach and contumely.

11.—This verse is immediately connected with v. 6.

12.—The Sept. and Syr. add the following three verses, of which there is no trace in any Hebrew M.S.

- "He that trusteth in falsehood feedeth the winds,
- "He also pursueth the birds of the air.
- "For he forsaketh the way of his own vineyard,
- "And forgetteth the path to his fields.
- "He wanders through a waterless desert,
- "And he gathered with his hands unprofitableness."

13. Folly is a noisy woman,  
She is simple, and knoweth nothing.
14. She sitteth at the door of her house,  
Upon a throne, in the high places of the city,
15. To call aloud to the passengers,  
Who are going straight forward in their paths :
16. "Whoever is simple, let him turn and come hither!"  
And to the man void of understanding she saith :
17. "Stolen waters are sweet,  
"And bread eaten clandestinely is pleasant!".....
18. But he considereth not that the dead are there,  
That her guests are in the depths of the grave!

## CHAPTER X.

### THE PROVERBS OF SOLOMON.

1. A wise son gladdeneth his father ;  
But a foolish son causeth grief to his mother.
2. Gifts of fortune cannot help ;  
But beneficence delivereth from death.
3. The Lord will not suffer the righteous soul to famish ;  
But the possessions of the wicked he causeth to vanish.
4. The negligent hand maketh poor ;  
But the hand of the diligent maketh rich.
5. He who gathereth in summer, is a son causing success ;  
But he who sleepeth in harvest, is a son causing shame.

15.—*In their paths.*—*i.e.* of religion.

16.—*Turn.*—From his virtuous course.

17.—*Stolen waters.*—This figurative language refers to the crime of adultery.

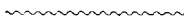
18.—Solomon concludes with lamenting that so many should be found, who inconsiderately accept the invitations of folly.

2.—*Fortune.*—Compare I. SAM. xiv., v. 47, where the word "Yarshia" from the same root "Resha" means *he prospered*.

*Cannot help.*—*i.e.* in time of trouble.

*From death.*—The Targum : "from an unnatural death."

6. Blessings are upon the head of the bountiful;  
But the mouth of the wicked concealeth violence.
7. The memory of the righteous is blessed;  
But the name of the wicked shall perish.
8. He who is wise of heart receiveth precepts;  
But he who speaketh foolishly falleth headlong.
9. He who walketh honestly walketh safely;  
But he who perverteth his ways shall be detected.
10. He who winketh with the eye causeth sorrow;  
And he who speaketh foolishly falleth headlong.
11. The mouth of the righteous is a spring of living water;  
But the mouth of the wicked concealeth violence.
12. Hatred exciteth contentions;  
But love concealeth many offences.
13. Upon the lips of him that hath understanding,  
wisdom is found;  
But there is a rod for the back of him that is void  
of sense.
14. Wise men treasure up knowledge;  
But the mouth of a fool causeth speedy ruin.
15. The rich man's wealth is his strong city;  
Their poverty is ruin to the poor.
16. The earnings of the righteous tend unto life;  
The revenue of the wicked unto sin.
17. He who observeth instruction is in the path of life;  
But he who rejecteth rebuke goeth astray.
18. He who concealeth hatred hath lying lips,  
And he who uttereth a slander is a fool.
19. In much speaking there wanteth not sin;  
But he who restraineth his lips is prudent.



6.—Houbigaut takes “Chamas” as a *Chaldee* word, and translates:  
“But *insult* shall cover the face of the wicked.”

10.—The Sept., Syr., and Arab. read: “But he who freely  
reproveth will make peace.”

15.—*Strong city*.—It is regarded by him as a protection.

16.—*Unto sin*.—They are abused for the purpose of sin—spent in sin.

19.—“He who is profuse of words causeth sin.” PIRKE ABOTH,  
Chap. i., Mishna 17.

20. The tongue of the righteous is as choice silver ;  
The heart of the wicked is of little worth.
21. The lips of the righteous feed many ;  
But fools die through the man void of conscience.
22. It is the blessing of the Lord which maketh rich,  
And He addeth no sorrows to it.
23. The doing of mischief is, as it were, sport to a fool ;  
So is wisdom to the man of understanding.
24. The terror of the wicked shall come upon him ;  
But the desire of the righteous shall be granted.
25. As the whirlwind passeth by, so vanisheth the wicked ;  
But the righteous hath an everlasting foundation.
26. As vinegar to the teeth, and as smoke to the eyes,  
So is the sluggard to those who send him forth.
27. The fear of the Lord prolongeth life ;  
But the years of the wicked shall be shortened.
28. The hope of the righteous endeth in joy ;  
But the expectation of the wicked cometh to nothing.
29. The way of the Lord is strength to the upright ;  
But it is terror to the workers of iniquity.
30. The righteous shall not always be shaken,  
Nor shall the wicked always dwell on earth.
31. The mouth of the righteous yieldeth wisdom ;  
But by the perverse tongue it shall be rooted out.
32. The lips of the righteous know how to conciliate ;  
But the mouth of the wicked uttereth perverse things.

## CHAPTER XI.

1. False scales are an abomination to the Lord ;  
But a perfect weight is His delight.
2. When pride cometh, then cometh disgrace ;  
But with the humble is wisdom.

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20.—*Of little worth.*—None of the commentators do fully understand the meaning of the Hebrew term: "Kimot." Some explain it as *dross*, others as *nothing*. The Targumist must have had quite a different reading, for his version is: "But unto the house of the wicked it is a wound." Eichel translates: "By far not the heart of the wicked."

31.—*Yieldeth.*—"Speaketh." JARCHI.

3. The integrity of the upright will guide them ;
But the perverseness of transgressors will destroy them .
4. Wealth will not help in the day of wrath ;
But beneficence delivereth from death.
5. The righteousness of the perfect man maketh his way plain ;
But the wicked falleth through his own wickedness.
6. The righteousness of the upright delivereth them ;
But transgressors are taken in their own mischief.
7. When a wicked man dieth, his hope cometh to an end ;
Yea, the mighty expectations come to an end !
8. The righteous man escapeth the danger,
And the wicked cometh into it in his stead.
9. By his mouth the hypocrite destroyeth his neighbours ;
But through the knowledge of the righteous they escape.
10. The city rejoiceth in the prosperity of the righteous,
And there is a shout of joy when the wicked perish.
11. By the blessing of the upright the city is exalted ;
But it is overthrown by the mouth of the wicked.
12. A man void of understanding despiseth his neighbour ;
But a man of discernment is silent.
13. He who goeth about as a talebearer revealeth secrets ;
But he who is of a faithful spirit concealeth a matter.
14. Where there is no guidance the people fall ;
But there is safety in a multitude of counsellors.
15. A man shall suffer severely if he is surety for a stranger ;
But he who hateth those who strike hands shall be safe.
16. A graceful woman retaineth honour,
As strong men retain riches.

7.—“When a *righteous* man dieth, hope *does not* perish.” Sept. but not confirmed by any Hebrew M.S.

11.—*By the blessing*.—The upright when wealthy, distribute their wealth for the good of their fellow-citizens.

12.—*Is silent*.—When despised or insulted. JARCHI.

16.—The Sept., Syr., and Arab. have here a very important various reading, though not confirmed by any Hebrew M.S. Their version is:

“A graceful woman retaineth honour ;

“*But she that hateth righteousness is a throne of disgrace.*

“*The slothful come to want health ;*

“*But strong men retain riches.*”

17. A benevolent man rewardeth himself ;
But a cruel man tormenteth his own flesh.
18. The wicked man toileth for deceitful wages ;
But he who soweth righteousness will have a true reward.
19. Righteousness is the basis of life ;
But he who pursueth evil causeth his own death.
20. The froward in heart are an abomination to the Lord ;
But the upright in their way are acceptable to Him.
21. Though hand be joined to hand,
A bad deed shall not remain unpunished ;
But the posterity of the righteous shall escape.
22. As a jewel of gold in a swine's snout,
So is beauty to a woman who is without discretion.
23. The desire of the righteous is only good ;
The expectation of the wicked [will end in] wrath.
24. Some one distributeth freely,
Yet his means increase ;
Another withholdeth more than is right,
Yet his means decrease.
25. A bountiful man shall be enriched ;
Yea, he who watereth shall himself also be watered.
26. The people curse him who withholdeth corn ;
But blessing cometh on the head of him who selleth it.
27. He who enquireth after good seeketh what is acceptable ;
But upon him who seeketh evil it shall come !
28. He who trusteth in his riches shall fall ;
But the righteous shall flourish as a leaf.

17.—*rewardeth*.—By the satisfaction which he feels that he is performing his duty, and by the favour which he obtains in the sight of God.

19.—“A righteous son is born to life ; but the pursuit of the ungodly is to death.” Sept. They read “Ben” instead of “Ken.”

21.—*Though hand be joined*.—Though the wicked himself may pervert the ends of justice, his posterity will suffer.

Shall escape.—From danger through the deeds of their fathers.

26.—*Withholdeth*.—In order to obtain an exorbitant price.

Selleth it.—At a reasonable price, without taking advantage of the necessities of the people.

28.—*Shall fall*.—i.e. wither as a leaf.

29. He who harasseth his household shall inherit the wind,
And the servants of the fool shall be to the wise in heart.
30. The fruit of the righteous man is a tree of life,
And the wise man gaineth souls.
31. Behold, the righteous man is requited upon earth,
Much more the wicked man and the sinner!

CHAPTER XII.

1. He who loveth correction loveth knowledge ;
But he who hateth rebuke is ignorant.
2. A good man receiveth favour from the Lord ;
But the man of evil devices He condemneth.
3. A man shall not be established by wickedness ;
But the root of the righteous shall not be moved.
4. A virtuous wife is the crown of her husband ;
But she who is infamous is as rottenness in his bones.
5. The devices of the righteous are just ;
The counsels of the wicked are deceitful.
6. The designs of the wicked are to lay in wait for blood ;
But the mouth of the upright delivereth them.
7. The wicked are overthrown and are no more ;
But the house of the righteous abideth.
8. A man shall be praised according to his intellect ;
But the perverse of heart shall be contemneth.

29.—*Harasseth*.—He who exacts of them oppressive tasks, thus creating animosity amongst them.

Servants.—"Ebed" though *singular*, should be understood in the *plural*, as in Genesis xxxii., v. 6.

30.—*Gaineth*.—He makes them virtuous.

31.—*Requited*.—Receives the punishment for his transgressions.

2.—The Targumist translates : " Pious is he who accepts evil from the Lord." Eichel : " A pious man is satisfied with that which the Lord granteth him ; but the man of evil devices striveth after unjust gain."

6.—*Delivereth them*.—The upright try to save those for whose blood the wicked lie in wait.

7.—"The wicked subvert themselves and are no more." HOUBIGANT.

9. He who demeaneth himself and is his own servant,
Is better than he who affecteth grandeur, yet lacketh
bread.
10. The righteous man careth for the life of his beast ;
But the mercies of the wicked are cruel.
11. He who tilleth his land shall be satisfied with bread ;
But he who followeth after vain things is senseless.
12. The wicked man longeth after the booty of evil men ;
But the root of the righteous yieldeth fruit.
13. By his offending lips a wicked man is ensnared ;
But the righteous man escapeth from trouble.
14. By the fruit of a man's mouth he shall be filled with
good ;
And the recompense of a man's hands will be re-
turned unto him.
15. The way of a fool is right in his own eyes ;
But a wise man hearkeneth unto counsel.
16. A fool's anger is instantly made known ;
But the prudent stiflcth insult.
17. He who uttereth faithfulness diffuseth truth ;
But a false witness diffuseth calumny.
18. The discourse of some is like the piercing of a sword ;
But the tongue of the wise healeth.
19. The lip of truth shall last for ever ;
But the lying tongue but for a moment.
20. Guile is in the heart of those who contrive evil ;
But to those who counsel peace there is joy.



9.—I have followed the opinion of Jarchi.—Houbigant : “ Better he who is despised *and hath an income.*”

10.—*The mercies.*—Even the compassion which he pretends to feel for others, has its origin in some wicked design.

12.—*Yieldeth fruit.*—The industry of the righteous man will furnish him with the means for his livelihood.

17.—“ The truth will a just man declare and speak out, but a false witness will equivocate.” HODGSON.

— 20.—*Guile.*—Deceit, which will end in disappointment.

Who counsel peace.—Who aim at the promotion of concord and happiness.

21. No calamity shall befall the righteous man ;
But the wicked shall suffer every kind of evil.
22. Lying lips are an abomination to the Lord ;
But they who act faithfully are his delight.
23. A prudent man concealeth his knowledge ;
But the heart of fools proclaimeth aloud their folly.
24. The hand of the active shall rule ;
But the idle hand shall be under subjection.
25. Sorrow boweth down the heart of a man ;
But a kind word gladdeneth it.
26. The righteous man is superior to his neighbour ;
But the way of the wicked causeth them to err.
27. The slothful man roasteth not that which he hunted ;
But the treasure of the active man is diligence.
28. In the path of righteousness is happy life ;
Yea, her pathway leadeth to immortality.

CHAPTER XIII.

1. A wise son hath hearkened to the instruction of his father ;

But a scoffer hath not hearkened to rebuke.

2. By the fruit of a man's mouth he shall eat good ;
But the soul of offenders shall be sated with violence.



23.—Prudence requires that knowledge should be displayed only on proper occasions. The fool proclaims his inconsiderate thoughts, without regard to the circumstances of time, place, or persons.

26.—*The righteous*.—Although the righteous man's station in life may be inferior to that of his neighbour.—I have followed the Targum. The translations of this verse vary. DURELL: "The righteous endeavour-eth to find out his friend." HODGSON: "A just man gaineth pre-eminence over his neighbour." DIMOCK: "A just man directeth his neighbour." EICHEL: "The pious wishes always to excel his neighbour."

27.—*But the treasure*.—"But the substance of a diligent man is precious." JARCHI

28.—*Yea, her pathway*.—"He who treadeth her path (i.e., of righteousness,) shall not die." JARCHI.



1.—Dimock proposes to read "Aheb" *loveth*, instead of "Ab" *father*, and would translate: "A wise son *loveth* instruction." This would support the anthithesis more strictly.

3. He who guardeth his mouth preserveth his life ;
But he who openeth wide his lips destroyeth himself.
4. The soul of the sluggard longeth, but getteth nothing ;
But the soul of the active is fully satisfied.
5. The righteous man hateth falsehood ;
But the wicked slandereth and abuseth.
6. Righteousness preserveth him who is upright in
his way ;
But wickedness overthroweth the sinner.
7. Many a one who affecteth to be rich, yet hath nothing—
Who affecteth to be poor, yet hath much substance.
8. The ransom of a man's life is his wealth ;
But the poor man heareth no upbraidings.
9. The light of the righteous shall shine brightly ;
But the lamp of the wicked shall flare.
10. Only through pride is contention caused ;
But with the well-advised is wisdom.
11. Wealth dishonestly gotten shall dwindle away ;
But that which is earned by diligence shall increase.
12. Hope deferred maketh the heart sick ;
But the desire which is come to pass is a tree of life.
13. He who despiseth the word shall be bound to it ;
But he who reverenceth the commandment shall be
rewarded for it.
14. The teaching of a wise man is a fountain of life,
To turn him from the snares of death.

3.—*Who openeth.*—He who speaks inconsiderately and wickedly.
Destroyeth himself.—"Let him dread evil." HODGSON.

8.—"A person free from iniquity is rich ; but he who listeneth not
to the call of conscience is poor indeed."—EICHEL. HOUBIGANT :
"But the poor man findeth no deliverance."

9.—*Shall shine.* Their prosperity shall be great and lasting.

10.—*Only.*—Durell reads "Raik" *vain*, instead of "Rak" *only*,
and considers it as a noun. He translates : "A *vain man* by pride
causeth contention." The Sept., Syr., and Arab. read : "Ra," *evil*.

11.—"Even trifling expenditures diminish the fortune, but by small
"savings it increaseth." DR. D. FRIEDLAENDER.

13.—*The word*—i.e., of God.

14.—"The laws are to the wise a fountain of life ; to the rebellious
they are the suares of death." DURELL.

15. A good conduct giveth favour ;
But the behaviour of transgressors is harsh.
16. Every prudent man acteth with precaution ;
But the fool spreadeth his folly publicly.
17. A wicked messenger falleth into calamity ;
But a faithful ambassador bringeth health.
18. Poverty and disgrace befall him who despiseth instruction ;
But he who regardeth rebuke will be honoured.
19. To satisfy the desire is sweet to the soul ;
Therefore fools abhor departing from evil.
20. He who walketh with the wise shall be wise ;
But the companion of fools shall be corrupted.
21. Calamity pursueth sinners ;
But good shall repay the righteous.
22. The good man's riches descend to his children's children ;
But the wealth of the sinner is laid up for the just man.
23. The tilled land of the poor yieldeth much food ;
Yet some through indiscretion come to want.
24. He who keepeth back his rod hateth his son ;
But he who loveth him correcteth him early.
25. The righteous man eateth to satisfy his appetite ;
But the belly of the wicked suffereth want.

CHAPTER XIV.

1. The wisdom of women buildeth their house ;
But a foolish woman overthroweth it with her hands.
2. He who walketh in uprightness feareth the Lord ;
But he who is perverse in his ways contemneth Him.
3. In the mouth of the fool is an insolent scourge ;
But the lips of the wise preserve them.

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19.—“To suppress the desire is sweet to the soul, yet fools, etc.”  
EICHEL.

23.—*The tilled land*.—Which is cultivated with attention and good management.—All the commentators on this verse vary.

24.—*Early*.—Before he has formed any vicious habits.

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3.—*The lips*.—The discretion which governs their conversation, and their care not to offend.

4. Where there are no oxen the crib is clean ;
But there is great increase by the strength of the ox.
5. A faithful witness lieth not ;
But a false witness poureth forth lies.
6. The scoffer seeketh wisdom and findeth it not ;
But knowledge is easy to the man of understanding.
7. Walk at a distance from the fool ;
Thou perceivest no knowledge from his lips.
8. The wisdom of the prudent man lieth in discerning
his way ;
But the folly of fools in deceit.
9. Guilt exposeth fools to scorn ;
But with the upright is favour.
10. The heart knoweth its own bitterness ;
And no stranger intermeddleth with its joy.
11. The house of the wicked shall be destroyed ;
But the tent of the upright shall flourish.
12. There is a way which seemeth right unto a man ;
But the end of that way is death !
13. Even in laughter the heart is sorrowful ;
And the end of mirth is grief.
14. By his own ways the perverse in heart shall be
punished ;
But the good man by his own works shall be rewarded.
15. The simple man believeth every word ;
But the prudent considereth his steps.
16. The wise man feareth and departeth from evil ;
But the fool rusheth on and is confident.

4.—“Where there are no oxen, there is *no corn*.” Houbigant.—
Oxen only were used in Judea for agriculture.

6.—*Is easy*.—Is readily discovered by.

8.—“It is the wisdom of a wise man to know himself ; but it is
the folly of fools to deceive themselves.”—HODGSON. DURELL: “But
folly misleadeth fools.”

9.—*Is favour*.—By the integrity of his life, a good man conciliates
the favour of his Maker and his fellow-creatures.

11.—In this verse the conditions of the families of the *wicked* and
the *good* are contrasted. An opposition was probably intended
between the *house* of the one, and the *tent* of the other ; the former
from its materials and construction, giving an idea of *permanency*,
the latter appearing weak and likely to be but of short duration.

17. He who is soon angry will act foolishly ;
And the mischievous man is odious.
18. The foolish possess folly as an inheritance ;
But the prudent are crowned with knowledge.
19. Bow the knee, ye corrupted, before the good !
Ye wicked, before the gates of the righteous !

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20. Even by his friend is the poor man hated ;
But the rich man's friends are many.
 21. He who despiseth his neighbour sinneth ;
But he who is kind to the needy happy is he.
 22. Truly they err who devise evil ;
Loving-kindness and truth are shewn to those who
devise good.

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23. In all labour there is abundance ;
But the talk of lips tendeth only to want.
 24. The crown of the wise is their wealth ;
But the folly of fools is folly.
 25. A true witness saveth lives ;
But the deceitful poureth forth lies.
 26. In the fear of the Lord there is strong confidence ;
For to His children He will be a refuge.
 27. The fear of the Lord is a fountain of life,
To turn from the snares of death.
 28. In a numerous people consisteth a king's glory ;
But the lack of subjects is the ruin of a prince.
 29. He who is slow to anger excelleth in wisdom ;
But he who is of a hasty spirit displayeth his folly.
 30. A contented heart giveth soundness to the flesh ;
But envy is rottenness to the bones.
 31. He who oppresseth a poor man reproacheth his Maker ;
But he who is kind to the needy honoureth Him.

17.—*And the mischievous.*—"But the man of prudence beareth many things." Houbigant, according to a various reading.

20.—*Hated.*—i.e., held in little esteem.

23.—From honest employment there results advantage, but from merely talking no benefit will be derived.

32. In his calamity the wicked man is cast down ;
But the righteous hath hope even in death.
33. Wisdom quietly abideth in the heart of the wise man ;
But that which is in fools is made known.
34. Righteousness exalteth a people ;
But sin is a disgrace to nations.
35. The king's favour is toward a prudent servant ;
But his wrath shall be against him who is negligent.

CHAPTER XV.

1. A gentle answer turneth away wrath ;
But harsh words raise anger.
2. Knowledge adorneth the tongue of the wise ;
But the mouth of fools poureth forth folly.
3. The eyes of the Lord are in every place,
Observing wicked men and good !
4. A mild tongue is a tree of life ;
But a mischievous one is like a destructive blast.
5. A fool contemneth the correction of his father ;
But he who regardeth rebuke is prudent.
6. In the house of the righteous man the substance
increaseth ;
But in the revenues of the wicked there is decrease.
7. The lips of the wise diffuse knowledge ;
But the heart of fools doeth not so.
8. The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the
Lord ;
But the prayer of the upright is acceptable to Him.

32.—*In his calamity.*—Under the afflictions which befall him, the wicked man has no support.

33.—*Is made known.*—Fools give rashly utterance to their thoughts.

2.—“The tongue of the wise giveth grace to their wisdom.”
HODGSON.

5.—*Rebuke.*—i.e., of his father.

7.—Durell renders : “The lips of the wise sow knowledge ; but the heart of fools does not receive it.”

8.—Sacrifices, however costly, if offered by the wicked are odious in the sight of God ; whilst the prayer of the pious, though unattended by sacrifices, is graciously accepted by Him.

9. The way of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord ;
But He loveth him who followeth after righteousness.
10. Sore correction shall be to him who forsaketh the way ;
He who hateth rebuke shall die.
11. The grave and the regions of death are before the Lord ;
How much more the hearts of the sons of men !
12. A scoffer loveth not one who rebuketh him,
Nor doth he go unto the wise.
13. A merry heart maketh a cheerful face ;
But by sorrow of heart the spirit is depressed.
14. The heart of the man of understanding seeketh
knowledge ;
But the mouth of fools feedeth upon folly.
15. Evil are all the days of him who is dejected ;
But he who is of a cheerful heart hath a continual feast.
16. Better to possess a little with the fear of the Lord,
Than much treasure with the torment of an accusing
conscience.
17. Better a dinner of herbs where love is,
Than a stalled ox and hatred therewith.
18. A passionate man stirreth up contention ;
But he who is slow to anger appeaseth strife.
19. The way of the sluggard is as a hedge of thorns ;
But the path of the upright is smooth.
20. A wise son gladdeneth his father ;
But a foolish man holdeth his mother in contempt.



10.—*The way*.—The path of true religion.

11.—*Are before*.—Are penetrated by His all-seeing eye.—See Job xxvi., v. 6.

12.—*Nor doth he go*.—To the teachers of wisdom, and has no desire of profiting by their good advice and instruction.

16.—*With the fear*.—And that inward peace which floweth from thence.

17.—*Stalled*.—Fattened.—Animal food was highly prized, and rarely met with, except at the tables of the opulent.

19.—*As a hedge*.—Everything requiring effort becomes painful and uneasy to him who indulges in slothful habits.

20.—*A foolish man*.—Various versions and five Hebrew MSS. read: "Ben Kesil," a foolish son, as in Chap. x., v. 1.

21. Folly is joy to the man void of understanding ;
But the man of discernment guideth in the right way.
22. Devices are frustrated for want of deliberation ;
But by the counsel of many they are established.
23. A man hath joy by the answer of his mouth ;
For a word spoken in season, how good it is !
24. To the wise the path of life leadeth upward ;
That he may depart from the pit beneath.
25. The Lord uprooteth the house of the proud ;
But he fixeth firmly the landmark of the widow.
26. The devices of evil men are an abomination to the Lord ;
But the words of the pure are pleasant.
27. He who seeketh unjust gain harasseth his household ;
But he who hateth gifts shall live.
28. The heart of the wise man meditateth how to answer ;
But the mouth of the wicked poureth forth evil things.
29. The Lord is far from the wicked ;
But He hearkeneth to the prayer of the righteous.
30. The light of the eyes cheereth the heart ;
Good tidings recruit the frame.
31. The ear that listeneth to good advice,
Will tarry in society with the wise.

21.—“To play one a trick is joy to the man void of understanding.”
EICHIEL.

23.—*Hath joy.*—He who gives good advice derives from thence great satisfaction.

A word.—Counsel opportunely given has a good effect.

24.—“The way of life is upward to the wise, in order that he may depart from the grave which is beneath.” DURELL.

26.—*Pleasant.*—Are regarded with favour by the Almighty.

27.—*Hateth gifts.*—He who refuses to give or to receive any bribe for perverting the course of justice.

Shall live.—i.e., happily.

28.—*Poureth forth.*—Without regard to their mischievous consequences.

29.—*Far.*—He does not afford them any assistance when they call upon Him.

30.—“As the light of the eyes cheereth the heart, so a good reputation filleth the bones with marrow.” HODGSON.

31.—*Good Advice.*—literally: *rebuks of life.*

32. He who refuseth correction despiseth his life ;
But he who heareth rebuke acquireth sense.
33. Wisdom teacheth the fear of the Lord ;
And before honour is humility.

CHAPTER XVI.

1. Man may prepare his thoughts ;
But the utterance of the tongue is from the Lord.
2. All the ways of a man are pure in his own eyes ;
But the Lord weigheth the spirits.
3. Entrust unto the Lord thy doings,
And thy devices will be established.
4. The Lord made all things to answer His design,
Even the wicked man for the day of calamity.
5. Every one proud of heart is an abomination to the Lord ;
Though hand be joined to hand, he shall not be held
guiltless.
6. Through loving-kindness and truth iniquity is forgiven ;
And through the fear of the Lord men depart from evil.
7. When the ways of a man are acceptable unto the Lord,
He maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him.
8. Better a little with righteousness,
Than great revenues without justice.

33.—*Before honour.*—Lowliness of mind is the best preparation for honour and distinction.—Hodgson has a good rendering of this verse :
“ Wisdom teacheth that the Lord is to be feared, and that before honour is humility.”

1.—A man may deliberate and determine upon the means which he will employ for the attainment of any end, yet the successful issue will depend upon the pleasure of God.—The sense of this verse is much contested.

2.—Every man endeavours to justify his conduct to his own mind.
The spirits.—The hearts of men.—The Searcher of hearts not only has regard to the action itself, but takes account also of the secret motive from which it springs.

3.—*Entrust.*—Solomon recommends us in all our undertakings to implore the blessing of God, and to leave the issue in His hands.

4.—*Day of calamity.*—The day of God's vengeance upon the evil doers.

9. A man's heart deviseth his way ;
But the Lord directeth his steps.

10. Mature counsel should be on the lips of a king,
That his mouth transgress not in judgment.
11. A just balance and scales are of the Lord ;
His actions are the weights of the bag.
12. Wicked actions should be an abomination to kings ;
For by righteousness the throne is established.
13. Righteous lips are acceptable unto kings ;
And loved shall he be who speaketh right things.
14. The wrath of a king is as messengers of death ;
Only a wise man appeaseth it.
15. In the light of the king's countenance is life ;
And his favour is as a cloud bringing the harvest-rain.

16. How much better it is to get wisdom than fine gold !
Yea, the acquisition of understanding is preferable to silver.

17. The first step of the upright is to depart from evil ;
He who observeth this way guardeth his life.
18. Pride is the forerunner of ruin ;
And a haughty spirit precedeth a fall.
19. Better to be of a humble spirit with the lowly,
Than to share the spoil with the proud.
20. He who is prudent in a matter shall have success ;
And happy is he who trusteth in the Lord.

11.—*His actions.*—i.e., the king's actions.

14.—Notwithstanding the anger of one high in authority is a sure forerunner of evil, yet men often venture to provoke the resentment of the powerful; but a wise man endeavours to disarm it.

15.—*The harvest-rain.*—The authorised version gives for "*Malkosh*" *latter rain* ; but the Hebrew nouns have nothing of *latter* or *former*, implied in their meaning. "*Malkosh*" is literally "*crop-rain*," that which fell just before the season of the harvest. "*Yora*" is literally the *springing-rain*, or rather the rain which makes to spring, that which fell upon the seed, newly sown, and caused the green blade to shoot out of the ground.

20.—*Prudent.*—He who acts upon the principles of true wisdom.

21. The wise of heart shall be called intelligent ;
And the eloquent of lips increaseth learning.
22. Understanding is a spring of life to its possessor ;
But the instruction of fools is folly.
23. The heart of a wise man teacheth his mouth,
And addeth instruction to his lips.
24. Agreeable words are like a honeycomb—
Sweet to the soul and sound to the body.
25. There is a way which seemeth right unto a man ;
But the end of that way is death !
26. He who laboureth, laboureth for himself ;
For his mouth urgeth him.
27. A worthless man contriveth mischief,
And on his lips there is, as it were, a burning fire.
28. A perverse man spreadeth contention ;
And a whisperer separateth friends.
29. A man of violence enticeth his friend,
And leadeth him into a way which is not good :
30. Fixing his eyes he deviseth perverse things ;
Moving his lips he executeth his evil design.
31. A brilliant crown is the hoary head ;
It is found in the way of righteousness.

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21.—*Increaseth learning.*—Eloquence gives additional value to learning, by furnishing the means of diffusing it.

22.—*The instruction.*—“To instruct fools is folly.” EICHEL.

24.—*Agreeable words.*—An instructive discourse is delightful and salutary.

25. — Compare Chap. xiv., v. 12.

26.—“A labouring man worketh for bread.” DIMOCK.

27.—“The wicked man feasts upon evil.” DIMOCK.

29.—This and the following verse are connected with each other.

31.—“It is related of one who implored a pious man to be his preceptor in morality, that the other replied laconically: “Where is thy moral master? let the crown of thy head instruct thee.” The suppliant having been unable to comprehend this reply, asked the godly man to explain himself more fully. He replied: “The Creator caused the hair to be bleached only to caution and to remind man, that grey hairs are the forerunners of death, and forget not that the sin of youth is accounted *one* sin, whilst the sin committed in old age is equal to a *thousand*.” MEIRI.

32. He who is slow to anger  
Is better than a mighty warrior ;  
And he who ruleth his spirit  
Than he who taketh a city.
33. The lot is cast into the urn ;  
But its whole deciding is from the Lord.

## CHAPTER XVII.

1. Better is a dry morsel, and quietness therewith,  
Than a house full of banquets with strife.
2. A wise servant ruleth over a son who causeth shame,  
And he shareth the inheritance with the brethren.
3. The refining pot is for silver, and the furnace for gold ;  
But the Lord is the searcher of hearts.
4. A wicked man listeneth to the lips of iniquity ;  
A liar hearkeneth to the tongue of wickedness.
5. He who scoffeth at the poor reproacheth his Maker ;  
He who rejoiceth at calamity shall not be held guiltless.
6. Children's children are the crown of the aged ;  
And the glory of children are their fathers.
7. Excellent speech becometh not an impious man,  
Much less do lying lips become a prince.
8. A gift is a precious stone in the eyes of its owner ;  
Withersoever it turneth it causeth to prosper.
9. He who concealeth an offence seeketh love ;  
But he who repeateth a matter separateth friends.
10. Rebuke entereth deeper into a man of understanding,  
Than a hundred stripes into a fool.



2.—*With the brethren.*—With the members of the family which he has served. Hodgson renders: “*Amongst the brethren.*”

4.—*A liar.*—The Sept.: “*But the righteous hearkeneth not to a naughty tongue.*”

5.—*Calamity.*—At the calamities which befall others.

7.—*Becometh not.*—Because it is not suited to his character.

8.—*To prosper.*—It wins the favour of the person to whom it is offered. Boothroyd: “It will give success to whomsoever presented.”

10.—*Rebuke.*—Even when not accompanied by any chastisement.

11. The rebellious man seeketh only evil ;  
Therefore a cruel messenger shall be sent against him.
12. Let a bear bereaved of its young meet a man,  
Rather than a fool in his folly.
13. He who returneth evil for good,  
Evil shall not depart from his house.
14. The beginning of strife is as one letting out water ;  
Therefore before contention breaketh out, abandon it.
15. Acquitting the wicked man and condemning the just,  
Both these are an abomination to the Lord.
16. What use is money in the hand of a fool ?  
To buy wisdom ?—for that he has no heart.
17. At all times the friend seems to love you ;  
But a friend in distress—he must yet be born.
18. A man void of understanding striketh hands ;  
He becometh surety in the presence of his neighbour.
19. He who loveth offence loveth quarrels ;  
He who raiseth high his gate seeketh ruin.
20. The froward in heart shall have no success ;  
And the perverse in tongue shall fall into calamity.
21. A fool causeth grief to him who begot him ;  
And the father of the impious man hath no joy.
22. A merry heart doeth good to the body ;  
But a broken spirit drieth up the bones.

11.—*Against him*.—To inflict upon him the most severe punishment. Hodgson renders: "A seditious man shall surely fall into evil ; yea, a minister of vengeance shall be sent against him."

12.—*In his folly*.—When his passions are most excited.

14.—"Therefore cease from a dispute before it degenerates into rage." BOOTHROYD.

17.—*He must yet be born*.—i.e., there is no true friend for a person in distress.

18.—*Striketh hands*.—By the striking of hands a person pledged himself to be responsible for a debt, etc.

*In the presence*.—Before a witness, which makes this a deliberate act, and binding upon the surety.

19.—*Loveth offence*.—He who shows a disposition to offend others.

*Raiseth high*.—From feelings of pride and ostentation.

22.—*Drieth*.—Causes the whole frame to waste away.

23. A wicked man taketh a bribe out of the lap,  
To pervert the ways of judgment.
24. Wisdom is before the face of the man of understanding;  
But the eyes of the fool are in the ends of the earth.
25. A foolish son is a sorrow to his father,  
And bitterness to her who bare him.
26. Even to impose a fine upon the righteous is not good,  
Nor to smite great men for their rectitude.
27. He who hath knowledge spareth his words;  
The man of understanding is of a quiet spirit.
28. Even a fool when silent is counted wise;  
He who closeth his lips is a prudent man.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

1. The unsociable seeketh his own desire;  
He disputeth against all sound wisdom.
2. A fool delighteth not in discretion;  
But rather in revealing his mind.
3. When a wicked man cometh, cometh also contempt;  
And with ignominy [cometh] disgrace.
4. The words of a man's mouth are deep waters,  
A copious stream, a fountain of wisdom.

23.—“A wicked man receiveth a bribe into his bosom.” BOOTHROYD.

24.—*In the ends.*—They wander far without discovering wisdom. Eichel: “The wise man findeth wisdom everywhere; the eyes of the fool seek it in the end of the world.”

28.—“Silence is a fence to wisdom.”—PIRKE ABOTH, Chap. i., Mishna 10.

“A word is worth *one* Selah, silence *two*,” says the Talmud.—Megillah, fol. 18.

2.—*Revealing.*—Exposing the folly of his heart, by giving utterance to his thoughts.

3.—Solomon points out here the consequences which flow from the fellowship with the wicked.

4.—*A man's.*—A great man's.—“Ish” is not only a man, but often means a man *with superior qualifications*. A strong man is called “Ish.” I. KINGS, ii., v. 2. A highly esteemed and noble man is called “Ish.” I. SAML. xxvi., v. 15, and NUMB. xiii., v. 3. Again, a great warrior is called “Ish.” EXOD. xvii., v. 9.

5. It is not good to respect the person of the wicked,  
So as to overthrow the righteous in judgment.
6. A fool's lips enter into contention,  
And his mouth calleth for blows.
7. A fool's mouth is his destruction,  
And his lips are the snare of his life.
8. The words of a talebearer are like dainties,  
For they descend into the inmost parts.
9. He who is slothful in his work  
Is brother to him who squandereth wastefully.
10. The name of the Lord is a tower of strength;  
The righteous man runneth into it and is safe.
11. The rich man's wealth is his strong city,  
And as a lofty wall in his own imagination.
12. Before destruction the heart of a man is haughty;  
But before honour is humility.
13. He who answereth before he heareth,  
It is folly and reproach unto him.
14. The spirit of a man will sustain his infirmity;  
But a dejected spirit who can bear?
15. The heart of a man of understanding acquireth  
knowledge,  
And the ear of the wise seeketh knowledge.
16. The gift of a man maketh room for him,  
And conducteth him in the presence of the great.
17. He who first pleadeth his cause seemeth just;  
But another entereth and cross-examineth him.

5.—The Targum: "It is not good to respect the wicked; judge not even if thou canst effect the decision (of the case) in favour of the righteous."

8.—*Descend*.—They are too often received with avidity by those to whom they are addressed.—The Sept., Syr., and Arab. read: "Fear casteth down the timorous, and the souls of the effeminate shall hunger." Hodgson, by adopting a various reading, would translate: "The words of a whisperer are as swords."

12.—*Before destruction*.—Pride is the forerunner of destruction.

16.—*Gift*.—A present offered by anyone removes any obstruction to his progress.

17.—*Just*.—He seems to have justice on his side, but his opponent puts to the test the truth of his assertions.

18. The lot causeth contentions to cease,  
And parteth between the mighty.
19. An offended brother is harder to be won than a strong city ;  
Their contentions are like the bars of a citadel.
20. With the fruit of a man's mouth is his belly filled ;  
He is filled with the produce of his lips.
21. Death and life are in the power of the tongue,  
And they who love it shall eat the fruit thereof.
22. He who findeth a wife findeth a good thing ;  
Yea, he receiveth favour from the Lord.
23. The poor man useth supplications ;  
But the rich answereth harshly.
24. A man of many companions will be ruined ;  
But there is a friend who sticketh closer than a brother.

18.—*The mighty*.—The two, each of whom claims to be in the right.—Dimock wishes this mode of terminating litigious suits obtained in the present day !

19.—*Contentions*.—Quarrels between near relations are as great obstacles to reconciliation, as bars are to admission into a citadel.

*Citadel*—Eichel: Harem.

20.—Durell divides the words differently and reads: "A man shall be satisfied with the fruit of his mouth, and his belly filled with the produce of his lips."

21.—"Rabbi Gamaliel told his servant, Tabi, to purchase some *good* viands at the market. He accordingly bought a tongue. On another occasion, the Rabbi told his servant to buy some *ordinary* provisions. He again bought a tongue. And when the astonished Rabbi asked for an explanation, the servant answered: Master, both good and evil accrue from the tongue, when *good* it is unsurpassable ; when *bad* it is most execrable." MIDRASH RABBA. LEV. xxii.

22.—*A wife*.—A good wife.

24.—*Will be ruined*.—Having divided his friendship among so many friends, he has not a single *true* one, but, if he has only *one* true friend, he is better to him than a brother.—

Houbigant, after the Syr. version: "It is the part of friends to shew themselves friendly." Hodgson: "A man by being friendly, shall have friends ; and often is a friend more kind than a brother."

## CHAPTER XIX.

1. Better is a poor man who walketh in integrity,  
Than he who is froward of lips and is a fool.
2. Truly, to be without knowledge is not good ;  
And he who hasteth with his feet erreth.
3. The folly of a man perverteth his way,  
And then his heart is indignant against the Lord.
4. Wealth addeth always new friends ;  
But from the poor man his friend standeth aloof.
5. A false witness shall not be held guiltless ;  
Nor shall he escape who poureth forth lies.
6. Many entreat the favour of a prince ;  
And every one is a friend to him who hath gifts to bestow.
7. All the brethren of the poor man shun him,  
How much more will friends stand aloof from him !  
He pursueth them with words, but in vain !
8. He who acquireth understanding loveth himself ;  
He observeth prudence to attain success.

1.—Various Hebrew MSS read: "Better is a poor man who walketh in integrity, than he who is perverse *in his ways*, though he *be rich*." The Syr. has the same version.

By such reading the antithesis is restored. In fact this reading is confirmed by Chap. xxviii., v. 6, where the whole verse is repeated. The attempts of Durell and Hodgson to extract a suitable sentiment from the text, by giving unusual meanings to the terms, are unnecessary where we have such authority for correcting.

2.—*Hasteth*.—He who acts without deliberation.—Nearly all the commentators on this verse vary. Houbigant's rendering is worth consideration: "It is not good for the soul to be without prudence, for he," etc.

5.—*Escape*.—The punishment about to be inflicted upon him by the Almighty, for his sins.

7.—*Shun him*.—They treat him as though he were a person for whom they had not the slightest regard.

*With words*.—He calls to their mind the assurances of their love and friendship, which they had shewn him when he was still in a flourishing condition.

*But in vain*.—They do as if they never were friends.

I have translated according to the Kethiv. If we adopt the Keri, I would translate: "How much more will his friends stand aloof from him, *if* he pursueth them with words *regarding himself*," i.e., if he desires them to fulfil the promises which they once made to him.

9. A false witness shall not be held guiltless ;  
And he who poureth forth lies shall perish.
10. Luxury graceth not a fool ;  
Much less for a slave to rule over princes.
11. Understanding maketh a man slow to anger ;  
Yea, it is his glory to pass over an offence.
12. The king's wrath is like the roaring of a lion ;  
But his favour is like dew upon the grass.
13. A foolish son is a calamity to his father ;  
And the brawls of a wife are as a continued dropping.
14. House and substance are inherited from parents ;  
But a prudent wife is from the Lord.
15. Slothfulness casteth into a deep sleep ;  
And the indolent person shall suffer hunger.
16. He who keepeth a command preserveth his life ;  
He who despiseth His ways shall die.
17. He who hath pity on the poor lendeth to the Lord ;  
And He will repay him that which he hath given.
18. Chastise thy son while there is hope,  
So shalt thou not desire his death.
19. He who giveth way to anger must bear the penalty ;  
Even if thou would'st deliver him,  
Thou wilt bring about more punishment.

9.—This verse is a repetition of verse 5.

10.—*Luxury*.—Hunt: "Authority," from Arab.

*A slave*.—If suddenly elevated to power, is but too likely to exercise it with violence.

11.—"How great and Godlike it is to forgive and absolve great faults."—MIDRASH YALKUT, Ps. 25.

12.—*Like the roaring*.—Calculated to inspire terror.

*Like the dew*.—Grateful and refreshing.

13.—*The brawls*.—Domestic strife is as fatal to the peace of a family, as the want of proper protection against the rain is injurious to a house.

15.—*Casteth*.—Makes a man unconcerned about the habits of life.

18.—*Not desire*.—Thou shalt not have reason to desire his death, which was the punishment assigned by the Law to an incorrigible rebellious son. See DEUT. xxi., v. 15. The Authorised Version conveys a sentiment very harsh, not to say unnatural.

19.—*Even*.—If thou would'st have compassion on him, that he should not be punished, he will meet with others who will not forgive him, and his punishment may be worse.

20. Attend unto counsel and receive instruction,  
That thou mayest be wise in thy latter years.
21. Various are the purposes of a man's heart ;  
But the counsel of the Lord, that standeth.
22. That which maketh a man beloved is his kindness ;  
And a poor man is better than a man of deceit.
23. The fear of the Lord tendeth unto life ;  
And he who from haughtiness murmureth  
Will not be free from calamity.
24. A slothful man dippeth his hand in the dish ;  
He will not even bring it back to his mouth.
25. Smite a scoffer and the simple will become prudent ;  
Reprove a man of understanding and he will discern  
knowledge.
26. He who plundereth his father,  
Who driveth away his mother,  
Is a son causing shame and disgrace.
27. Cease, my son, to attend unto instruction  
Which would make thee err from the words of know-  
ledge.
28. An ungodly witness scoffeth at judgment ;  
And the mouth of the wicked devoureth iniquity.
29. Punishments are prepared for scoffers,  
And stripes for the back of fools.

23.—*Murmureth*.—For this translation of the word, "Yalin," see EXOD. xv., v. 24.

*Free*.—"Yippaked." Comp. I SAM. xx., v. 18.

24.—*Dippeth*.—Allusion is here made to the Oriental manner of serving up meats at table, and to the way in which the guests helped themselves.

*He will not*.—He will not take the trouble of raising his food to his mouth, though he may feel the cravings of hunger.

25.—Although the impious man may not himself be reclaimed by even the severest punishment, yet those who are not hardened offenders may take warning and amend. Remonstrance alone will suffice to correct him who is of a better disposition.

26.—"I have no doubt but this verse has suffered in its order and arrangement. I would read: He who plundereth his father is a son causing shame ; he who driveth away his mother is a son bringing reproach." BOOTHROYD.

## CHAPTER XX.

1. Wine is a mocker, strong drink a brawler,  
And no one who is led astray thereby will become wise.
2. The king's terror is like the roaring of a lion;  
He who enrageth him endangereth his own life.
3. It is an honour to a man to cease from strife;  
But every fool is contentious.
4. A sluggard will not plough because of the cold;  
Hence shall he beg in harvest and obtain nothing.
5. Counsel in the heart of a man is like deep waters;  
But a man of understanding draweth it out.
6. Amongst many men a man will meet his benefactor;  
But a faithful man who can find?
7. The righteous man who walketh in integrity,  
Happy will be his children after him.
8. A king who sitteth upon the throne of judgment  
Scattereth away with his eyes all evil.
9. Who can say: "I have cleansed my heart,  
I have purified myself from sin?"
10. Divers weights, and divers measures,  
Both are alike an abomination to the Lord.
11. Even a child maketh himself known by his doings,  
Whether his actions will be pure or right.
12. The hearing ear, and the seeing eye,  
The Lord hath made both of them.

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 1.—*Mocker*.—"We may use "letz" as a participle, and translate: "Wine mocketh, strong drink maketh an uproar."—BOOTHROYD. "Letz" is used by Solomon, to signify a vicious pestilent man.—(ix. chap., v. 8.; xv. chap., v. 12.; xxiv. chap., v. 9.) Vicious applied to wine means that it inciteth to vice.

2.—*The king's terror*.—The terror inspired by the anger of the king. Compare chap. xix., v. 12.

4.—"The sluggard will not plough in *autumn*."—DIMOCK. But he did not reflect that our season for sowing is not that of Judea.

5.—See chap. xviii., v. 4.

6.—*Who can find*.—This question amounts to a declaration that such a person is very rarely to be met with.

11.—"Even a child by his behaviour will discover whether what he hath done hath been innocent and right."—HODGSON.

13. Love not sleep, lest thou come to poverty ;
Open thine eyes, thou shalt be filled with bread.
14. "It is bad, It is bad," saith the buyer ;
But when he has gone his way he boasteth.
15. There is gold, and abundance of pearls ;
But ornaments more precious are the lips of wisdom.
16. Take his garment, for he was surety for a stranger ;
And take a pledge of him for a strange woman.
17. Bread of falsehood is sweet to a man ;
But afterwards his mouth is filled with gravel.
18. Form the plans with deliberation,
And after good consideration make war.
19. He who goeth about as a talebearer revealeth secrets ;
Therefore associate not with a babbler.
20. He who curseth his father or his mother—
His lamp shall be put out in the darkest darkness.
21. An inheritance may be gotten hastily at the first,
But in the end it will not be blessed.
22. Say not thou: "I will repay evil!"
Hope in the Lord, He will save thee.
23. Divers weights are an abomination to the Lord ;
And deceitful scales are not good.
24. The steps of a man are from the Lord,
And what man can understand His way?



13.—*Love not.*—indulge not immoderately in sleep.
Open thine eyes.—When thou hast sufficiently recruited nature by sleep, enter again with alacrity upon the duties of life.

14.—*Boasteth.*—Of his bargain.—This and the following five verses are wanting in the Sept. and Arab.

15.—*There is gold.*—There are ornaments of gold.

16.—*For a strange woman.*—Take a pledge of him who is surety for a strange woman.

17.—*Bread of falsehood.*—Bread obtained by dishonest means.

19.—"Hence with his deceiving lips be not entangled." BOOTHROYD.

20.—*Curseth.*—He who dishonours and reviles them.

His lamp.—He shall have no comfort to cheer him in the season of adversity.

22.—*Save thee.*—Deliver thee from thine enemies.

25. The man is ensnared who rashly uttereth holy words,
And after vowing maketh inquiry.
26. A wise king scattereth the wicked,
And bringeth the wheel over them.
27. The spirit of a man is the lamp of the Lord,
Wherewith He searcheth all the inmost parts.
28. Mercy and truth guard the king ;
Yea, his throne is supported by mercy.
29. As the ornament of young men is their strength,
So the hoary head is the glory of the aged.
30. The probing of a wound cleanseth away the evil matter ;
So do stripes which reach the inmost parts.

CHAPTER XXI.

1. As streams of water is the king's heart in the hand of the Lord ;

He turneth it whithersoever He pleaseth.

2. Every way of a man is right in his own eyes ;
But the Lord weigheth the hearts.
3. To do righteousness and justice
Is more acceptable to the Lord than sacrifice.
4. A lofty look and a proud heart
Are the germ of vice in the wicked.
5. The devices of the active tend only to plenty ;
But those of him who hasteth only to want.
6. He who getteth treasures by a lying tongue
Is like a dissipated vapour to men who seek death.

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25.—*Uttereth*.—He who binds himself by an oath.

26.—*The wheel*.—Used for separating the grain from the straw.

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4.—*Germ*.—The Sept. and many commentators read : "Nair," *lamp*, instead of "Nir." Dimock proposes to read "Neder," *a vow*, and would translate : "And the *vow* of wicked is sin."

5.—*The devices*.—The plans which are deliberately conceived, and executed with zeal and alacrity.—Houbigant reads : "Atsel" instead of "Atz." "But every *slothful* man only to want."

6.—Hebrew MSS, as also the Sept., have two important various readings, which materially improve the text. They read : "Rodef" and "Mok'she." Jarchi has also the latter variation. The translation according to the var. reading would be : "He who getteth riches by a lying tongue pursueth vanity and the snares of death."

7. The rapine of the wicked shall snatch them away,
Because they refuse to do justice.
8. The way of a depraved man is crooked ;
But the pure is upright in his work.
9. Better to dwell in a corner of the house-top,
Than with a quarrelsome wife even in a large house.
10. The heart of the wicked man desireth evil ;
Nor doth even his friend find favour in his eyes.
11. By punishing the scoffer the simple is made wise ;
By instructing the wise he receiveth knowledge.
12. The righteous man considereth the house of the wicked ;
He overthroweth the wicked for their wickedness.
13. He who stoppeth his ear at the cry of the poor,
He also shall call aloud but shall not be answered.
14. A gift in secret pacifieth anger ;
And a bribe put into the lap, mighty wrath.
15. To do justice is joy to the righteous,
And terror to the workers of iniquity.
16. The man who erreth from the way of understanding
Shall rest in the assembly of the dead.
17. A poor man who loveth feasting,
Who loveth wine and oil, will not be rich.

7.—Boothroyd : “The plunder of the wicked *terrifieth* them, yet they refuse to do what is right.”—“A *misfortune*, which befalleth the wicked, rooteth them out.” DETMOLD.

9.—*House-top*.—The roofs of the houses in the East were flat, and it was usual to frequent them for retirement, air, exercise, etc.

Houbigant : “Than with a contentious woman in the same house.”

10.—*Favour*.—In prosecuting his evil purposes, the wicked man disregards all the ties of friendship.

11.—See chap. xix., v. 25, and note.

12.—*Considereth*.—He derives lessons of instruction from witnessing the punishment inflicted by the Almighty upon the family of the wicked.

13.—*Call aloud*.—Unto God for aid in time of distress.

14.—*Put into the lap*.—Secretly.—Unless the bribe were thus offered it would fail of its intended effect.

16.—*Of the dead*.—Of the departed sinners.

18.—*The transgressors*.—Shall suffer instead of the upright.

18. The wicked man shall be a ransom for the righteous,
And the transgressor instead of the upright.
19. Better to dwell in a desert land,
Than with a quarrelsome and passionate wife.
20. Desirable treasure and oil are in the dwellings of
the wise ;
But the foolish man devoureth them.
21. He who followeth after righteousness and mercy
Shall find life, righteousness, and honour.
22. A wise man did scale the city of the mighty,
And brought down the strength of its confidence.
23. He who guardeth his mouth and his tongue
Guardeth himself from troubles.
24. Bold insolent offender is he to be called
Who with violence doeth lawless deeds.
25. The desire of the sluggard killeth him,
Because his hands refuse to labour.
26. All day long the covetous man is craving ;
But the righteous giveth and withholdeth not.
27. The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination ;
Much more if he bringeth it with a wicked mind.
28. A false witness shall perish ;
But the man who heareth shall speak continually.
29. The wicked man has assurance in his looks ;
But the upright considereth his ways.



20.—*Are in the dwellings.*—Are laid up in store for use whenever required.

Devoureth.—Wastes them at once, without reflecting that he may be some day wanting them.

22.—*Of its confidence.*—In which the inhabitants trusted.

26.—A subject seems to be wanting in this verse. Hodgson considers “Atzel” in the preceding verse as the subject of this, and renders : “He all the day doth wishfully covet ; but the just man’s desires are fully gratified.”

28.—*Who heareth.*—He who testifies to what he has seen and heard, shall have continual opportunities of delivering his testimony, without any danger to himself, as he cannot be convicted of falsehood.

30. No wisdom, no understanding,
No counsel can succeed against the Lord.
31. The horse is made ready for the day of battle;
But the victory is from the Lord.

CHAPTER XXII.

1. A [good] name is rather to be chosen than great riches;
To be kindly regarded is better than silver and gold.
2. The rich and the poor meet together;
The Lord is the Maker of them all.
3. The prudent man seeth evil and hideth himself;
But the simple transgress and are punished.
4. The reward of humility and of the fear of the Lord
Are riches, and honour, and life.
5. Thorns and snares are in the path of the froward;
He who guardeth himself is far from them.
6. Train up a child in the way he should go,
And when he is old he will not depart from it.
7. The rich man ruleth over the poor,
And the borrower is servant to the lender.
8. He who soweth iniquity shall reap calamity;
And the rod of his fury shall be consumed.

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31.—Although the Israelites were especially enjoined (DEUT. xvii., v. 17, and xx., v. 1,) not to place reliance in the number and strength of their horses, yet history shows that they were always inclined to do so, (JOSH. xi., v. 6, 9. II SAM. l., viii., v. 4. ISAI. xxx., v. 16.) Therefore they required such admonitions as Solomon has here given.

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2.—*Meet together.*—As members of the same civil community; hence their obligation to mutual kindness and benevolence.

3.—*Seeth evil.*—He seeth the punishment which will follow his transgression, therefore he hideth himself, i.e., he does not commit the sin. The simple transgress and take no means to appease God's anger, or to avert the vengeance which threatens them, hence they are punished.—The same passage occurs Chap. xxvii., v. 12, with some slight variations.

5.—*Thorns and snares.*—These terms are used figuratively for punishments and calamities.

Far from them.—By so doing he escapes them.

8.—*His fury.*—His violent and oppressive power shall be broken.

9. He who has a bountiful eye will be blessed ;
Because he giveth of his bread to the poor.
10. Cast out the scoffer and contention will depart ;
Yea, strife and reproach will cease.
11. He who loveth purity of heart,
Who hath grace on his lips,
The king will be his friend.
12. The eyes of the Lord guard knowledge ;
And He overthroweth the words of the transgressors.
13. The sluggard saith : " There is a lion without,
" I shall be slain in the streets ! "
14. The mouth of strange women is a deep pit ;
He with whom the Lord is angry falleth therein.
15. Folly is bound to the heart of a child ;
But the rod of correction will remove it far from him.
16. He who oppresseth the poor to enrich himself,
And he who giveth to the rich, will only come to want.



9.—*A bountiful eye.*—A charitable disposition.

To the poor.—From whom he can expect no return.

The Sept. and Arab. read : " Ani," a poor man, instead of " Ayin," eye, but their versions are evidently wrong. See Chap. xxiii., v. 6, and xxviii., v. 22.

11.—The Authorised Version yields no sense.—Dimock suggests some alterations in the text, and would translate : " The Lord loveth purity of heart ; but a king is pleased with the grace of the lips."

12.—*Guard knowledge.*—They protect the man of knowledge, and confirm his sayings.

13.—*There is a lion.*—Thus he makes vain excuses for his indolence and his reluctance to go forth to his work.

14.—*The mouth.*—By which they allure the unwary to their destruction.

15.—The importance of early correction and instruction to children is frequently insisted upon by Solomon. See Chaps. xiii., v. 24; xix., v. 18; xxii., v. 6.

16.—Nearly all the commentators on this verse vary. Jarchi explains this verse: " He who oppresseth the poor to enrich himself, "will consequently be obliged to give bribes to the rich, i.e., to men "of influence and will be ruined."

17. Incline thine ear and attend to the words of the wise ;
Yea, apply thy heart to my instruction.
 18. For how pleasant if thou keep them so within thee,
That they all be established upon thy lips.
 19. That thy trust may be in the Lord,
I have this day given thee instruction, yea to thee.
 20. Have I not written for thee three main doctrines,
With counsel and knowledge ;
 21. To teach thee truth—words of faithfulness,
To answer faithful words to those who send to thee ?
 22. (I.) Rob not the poor man because he is poor ;
Nor crush thou the destitute at the gate ;
 23. For the Lord will defend their cause,
And despoil those who despoil them of life.
 24. (II.) Make no friendship with a passionate man ;
Nor associate with a man prone to wrath ;
 25. Lest thou learn his ways,
And take to thyself a snare for thy life.
 26. (III.) Be not one of those who strike hands ;
Of those who are sureties for debts ;
 27. If thou hast nothing wherewith to pay,
Why should thy bed be taken from under thee ?
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28. Remove not the ancient landmark,
Which thy fathers have fixed.
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17.—Solomon here resumes his exhortation to the study of wisdom, and again points out the good which will result from a due attention to its precepts. This exhortation is succeeded by a second collection of admirable Proverbs, relating, like those which have preceded, to the conduct of life, but not generally characterised by the same sententious brevity.

18.—*Established*.—To be the constant subject of your discourse. See DEUT. vi., v. 7.

19.—The Sept.: “I have made known to thee *His way*.”

22.—(I). These are the three main doctrines mentioned v. 21.

Is poor.—And therefore has no power to resist your oppression.

Gate.—Justice was usually administered there. See AMOS v., v.

15. JOB v., v. 4.

23.—*Of life*.—The oppressor [shall pay the penalty with his life.

29. Seest thou a man so diligent in his business
That he can stand before kings ?
Let him not stand before obscure men.

CHAPTER XXIII.

1. When thou art sitting at meat with a ruler,
Consider well in whose presence thou art ;
2. And put a knife to thy throat,
If thou art a man given to appetite.
3. Long not for his dainties,
For they are deceitful meat.
4. Toil not to be rich ;
Cease from thine own wisdom.
5. Wilt thou fix thine eyes upon things which disappear ?
For riches make to themselves wings,
And fly away as an eagle into the air.
6. Eat not the bread of him who hath an evil eye,
Nor long for his dainties.
7. For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he ;
“ Eat and drink,” he saith to thee,
But his heart is not with thee.
8. The morsel thou hast eaten thou wilt vomit up ;
Thy complimentary words are thrown away.

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29.—This verse has no connection whatever with the preceding verses, but seems rather to be connected with the next Chapter.

*Let him.*—Because they do not know how to value such a man.

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2.—*Put a knife.*—Let a sense of imminent danger cause thee to restrain thy inclinations.—Hodgson renders: “And put restraint upon thine appetite if thou be inclined to intemperance.”

3.—*Deceitful.*—If indulged in too freely, they may lead you into indiscretions.

4.—*Cease*—Put an end to those wise schemes by which you calculate upon getting riches.

7.—*Is not with thee.*—His invitation is not cordial.

8.—When you shall have discovered his insincerity, you will lose all relish for his delicacies, and consider the courtesies which you have shown your entertainer as utterly thrown away.

9. Speak not in the ears of a fool ;  
For he will despise thy prudent discourse.
10. Remove not the ancient landmark,  
Nor invade the fields of the orphans ;
11. For their Avenger is mighty,  
He will defend their cause against thee.
12. Apply thy heart unto instruction ;  
And thine ears to the words of knowledge.
13. Withhold not correction from a child ;  
If thou beat him with the rod he will not die ;
14. Him thou beatest with the rod ;  
But rescuest his soul from the grave.
15. My son, if thy heart be wise,  
Mine heart, even mine shall rejoice ;
16. And my reins shall exult,  
When thy lips speak right things.
17. Let not thy heart envy sinners ;  
But let it be ever in the fear of the Lord.
18. For surely there is a future state ;  
And thine expectation will not be cut off.
19. Hear thou, my son, and be wise,  
And guide thy heart in the way.
20. Be not thou among those who drink wine to excess ;  
Among those who associate together in feasting ;
21. For the drunkard and the glutton come to poverty ;  
And slumbering clotheth with rags.
22. Harken unto thy father who begat thee ;  
And despise not thy mother because she is old.

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9.—See Chap. ix., v. 8., and note.

13.—*He will not die.*—He will avoid the extreme penalty of transgression See Chap. xix., v. 18.

18.—*Expectation.*—"Thy thread of life will not be cut off." This translation is ascribed to Mendelssohn. See "*Meassef*," for the year 5548.

19.—*In the way.*—i.e., of understanding.

21.—*Slumbering.*—Drowsiness, brought on by their excesses.

22.—*Because she is old.*—As though on that account she were not competent to give good advice, when in reality, her greater experience adds weight to her admonitions.

23. Buy truth ; and do not sell  
Wisdom, instruction, and understanding.  
24. The father of the righteous greatly rejoiceth ;  
And he that begetteth a wise son hath joy in him.  
25. Let thy father and thy mother have joy,  
And let her who bare thee rejoice.

26. My son, give me thy heart,  
And let thine eyes observe my ways.  
27. Truly, a harlot is a deep pit-fall,  
And a strange woman is a narrow well.  
28. She also lieth in wait like a robber,  
And increaseth transgressors amongst men.  
29. Who hath woe ? who misery ?  
Who hath quarrels ? who complainings ?  
Who hath wounds without cause ?  
Who hath redness of eyes ?  
30. They who tarry late over wine ;  
They who go about to seek mingled wine.  
31. Look not thou upon wine when it is red,  
When it sparkleth in the cup,  
When it goeth down smoothly ;  
32. In the end it will bite like a serpent,  
And sting like an adder.  
33. Thine eyes will look upon strange women,  
And thy heart will utter perverse things.  
34. Thou wilt be as if lying in the midst of the sea,  
Or as if lying upon the top of a mast.

26.—The Jerusalem Talmud thus comments on this verse : “ Rabbi Isaac observes, Heart and eyes are the two agents of sin, for Scripture saith: ‘ That ye seek not after your own heart and your own eyes.’ ” (NUM. xv., v. 39.) Thus saith the Holy One, blessed be He, if thou “ givest me thy heart and thine eye, I know that thou art mine ! ” — Berachoth, Chap. i.

28.—By the wiles of women the Israelites were frequently led into the sin of idolatry.

33.—*Thine eyes*.—When inflamed with the effects of your intemperance, you will look with lustful and adulterous desire upon the harlot.

35. "They have stricken me, I suffered no pain !  
 "They have beaten me, I felt nothing !  
 "O that I were awake, I would seek it yet again !"

## CHAPTER XXIV.

1. Be not envious against wicked men,  
 Nor desire to be with them ;
2. For their heart meditateth destruction,  
 And their lips speak mischief.
3. By wisdom is a house builded,  
 And by understanding it is established ;
4. Yea, by knowledge the chambers are filled  
 With all precious and goodly substance.
5. A wise man is mighty ;  
 Yea, a man of knowledge is powerful in strength ;
6. Hence after good deliberation thou wilt make war  
 with success ;  
 And there is safety in a multitude of counsellors.
7. Wisdom is too high for a fool ;  
 He openeth not his mouth at the gate.
8. He who planneth to do evil,  
 Him will men call a mischievous person.
9. A foolish devise is sinful ;  
 And the scoffer is an abomination to men.

35.—Here are the words of a drunkard. He boasts of an entire exemption from the pain of correction, arising from the insensibility into which his excesses had thrown him; and then he declares his determination again to indulge, as soon as he is able, his vicious propensities. Alas ! this is but too much supported by facts ! !

*It.—i.e., the wine.*

5.—See ECCLES. Chap. ix., v. 14—16.—The Targum : "*Better a wise than a mighty man, and a man of knowledge than the powerful.*" Dimock takes "Geber" as a verb: "*The wise man prevails over the powerful, and a man of knowledge over the mighty in strength.*"

6.—See Chap. xx., v. 18.

7.—*Too high.*—He cannot attain it.

*At the gate.*—In the place of judgment, where wisdom in decision is especially required.

8.—*Mischievous person.*—And he will be expelled from society.

10. If thou faint in the day of calamity,  
Calamity itself will be thy strength.
11. Rescue those who are led away to death,  
And those who are ready to be slain,  
If thou canst prevent it.
12. If thou should'st say : " Behold, we know him not !"  
Will not He who weigheth the heart consider it ?  
And doth not He who keepeth thy soul know it ?  
Yea, He rendereth to man according to his doings.
13. My son, thou eatest honey because it is good ;  
And honeycomb which is sweet to thy palate ;
14. So will the knowledge of wisdom be to thy soul,  
When thou findest that there is a future state,  
And that thine expectation will not be cut off.
15. Plot not, O wicked man, against the dwelling of the just,  
Nor despoil his place of rest ;
16. For the just may fall seven times and yet rise ;  
But the wicked will be overthrown by calamity.
17. Rejoice not when thine enemy falleth,  
Nor let thy heart exult when he stumbleth ;
18. Lest the Lord see, and it displease Him,  
And He turn his anger from him.

10.—Jarchi explains this verse : " If thou stand aloof from thy friend in the day of his trouble, thy strength will fail in the day of thy own trouble."

11.—In this and the following verse there is an obvious reference to the Jewish custom of making proclamations before a criminal when led out to execution, that any person able to prove his innocence should come forward and do so.

12.—*Behold*.—Thus disclaim all knowledge of this person, instead of exerting yourself to procure his pardon by bearing testimony to his innocence.

14.—See Chap. xxiii., v. 18.

16.—*Fall*.—Not into *sin*, for that does not consist with his character, but into *trouble* and *affliction*.

*Overthrown*.—And ruined irrecoverably.—The Talmud has here an important various reading. See various readings at the end.

18.—*Turn*.—Lest your enemy should be again permitted to prosper, and effect your destruction.

19. Be not jealous of evil men ;  
Envy not the wicked ;
20. For there will be no future state for the evil man ;  
The lamp of the wicked will be put out.
21. My son, fear the Lord and the king ;  
And associate not with those who are fond of change.
22. For their calamity will rise suddenly ;  
And who knoweth the ruin which both may inflict ?

- .....
23. THESE ALSO ARE SAID TO THE WISE :  
It is not good to respect persons in judgment.
  24. He who saith to the wicked : "Thou art righteous,"  
Him will people curse, him nations abhor.
  25. But men will delight in those who rebuke him,  
And a good blessing shall come upon them.
  26. Men will kiss the lips of him  
Who pronounceth a just sentence.
  27. Prepare thy work without,  
And make it fit for thyself in the field,  
Afterwards thou mayest build thy house.
  28. Be not a witness against thy neighbour without cause,  
And deceive not with thy lips.
  29. Say not: "As he hath done to me, so will I do to him,  
"I will render to the man according to his doings."
- .....
30. I passed near the field of the sluggard,  
And by the vineyard of a man void of sense;

19.—*Jealous*.—When thou seest a wicked man prospering.

21.—*Change*.—Ever ready to engage in rebellious projects.

22.—*Who knoweth*.—The punishment to which he will have to submit, if he rebels against God and the king, who is invested with lawful authority ?

23.—*To the wise*.—This might also be rendered : "These also are sayings of the wise."

26.—*The lips of him*.—The Targum : "The lips of them.—The kiss was a mark of honour and respect.

27.—The alteration made by Kennicott, Hunt, and others, in the division of this verse is unnecessary.—The present division is confirmed by the Talmud.

28.—*Deceive*.—Utter false testimony against him.

31. And behold, all of it was overgrown with thistles,  
The face thereof was covered with nettles,  
And its wall of stones broken down!
32. When I contemplated this I laid it to heart;  
When I saw this I received instruction.
33. "A little sleep—a little slumber—  
"A little folding of the hands to rest—"
34. So shall poverty come upon thee as an invader,  
And want as an armed man!

## CHAPTER XXV.

1. THESE ALSO ARE PROVERBS OF SOLOMON WHICH  
PERSONS APPOINTED BY HEZEKIAH, KING OF JUDAH,  
TRANSCRIBED.
2. It is a glory to God to conceal a matter;  
And a glory to kings to search out a matter.
3. The heavens for height, the earth for depth,  
And the heart of kings are alike unsearchable.
4. Remove the dross from the silver,  
And there will come forth a vessel for the refiner;
5. Remove the wicked man from the presence of the king;  
And his throne will be established by righteousness.
6. Affect not grandeur in the presence of the king  
Nor stand in the place of great men;
7. For better it is that one should say unto thee:  
"Come up hither;"  
Than that one should put thee lower in the presence  
of the prince whom thine eyes have seen.

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33.—See Chap. vi, v. 10, and note.

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- 2.—See More Nebuchim of Maimonides, Part II., Chap. 39.
- 4.—This verse and the next are connected with each other.
- 6.—"Do not occupy the conspicuous place in the city," says the Talmud.—Pesachim, fol. 112.
- 7.—*Whom thine eyes have seen.*—To whom thou hast presumed to approach so near.

8. Go not forth hastily to strive ;  
Consider what thou wilt do in the end thereof,  
When thine adversary hath put thee to shame.
  9. Plead thy cause with thy neighbour,  
And reveal not the secret of others ;
  10. Lest he who heareth it put thee to shame ;  
For thy slander thou canst not retract.
- 
11. As apples of gold, in silver filigree work,  
Is a word spoken in its proper time.
  12. As a jewel of gold, and as an ornament of fine gold,  
Is a wise reprover to an attentive ear.
  13. As the coldness of snow in the time of harvest,  
Is a faithful messenger to those who send him ;  
For he refresheth the soul of his masters.
  14. As clouds and wind without rain ;  
Is he who falsely boasteth of his liberality.
  15. By slowness to anger is a ruler appeased ;  
And a soft tongue breaketh the bones.
  16. Hast thou found honey ? Eat it in moderation ;  
Lest thou be surfeited with it, and vomit it up.

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8.—*Consider*.—"Pen." Imperative mood, root "Panah."

9.—"There is no affinity nor opposition between these precepts. "The fault is evidently in the union of parts of distinct verses." Durell.—He would alter it after this manner: 8, "Go not forth hastily to strive, consider what thou wilt do in the end thereof.—9, "[But] "when thine adversary hath put thee to shame, plead then thy cause "with thine adversary." 10, "Reveal not the secret of others," etc.

12.—A man of teachable and good disposition will esteem the person who reproves him for his misconduct, as much as if he had presented him with any valuable ornament.

13.—*Coldness*.—The Chaldee sense is *cold*, but Hunt has proved that it most probably denotes some *vessel* in which snow was preserved for the purpose of cooling their liquors.

*Snow*.—It was customary to use *snow* for cooling wines, etc., during the summer season.

15.—*By slowness to anger*.—By a patient endurance of his wrath.

*A soft tongue*.—A mild and gentle answer causes persons of the hardest nature to relent.

17. Visit not too frequently thy neighbour's house ;  
Lest he be surfeited with thee and hate thee.
18. As a club, a sword, and a sharp-pointed arrow,  
Is he who beareth false witness against his neighbour.
19. Like a broken tooth, and a tottering foot,  
Is confidence in a faithless man in the day of calamity.
20. As one who strippeth off his garment on a cold day,  
Or as vinegar poured upon soda,  
Is he that singeth songs to a heavy heart.
21. If thine enemy be hungry give him bread to eat ;  
And if he be thirsty give him water to drink ;
22. For thou wilt heap coals of fire upon his head,  
And the Lord will reward thee.
23. The north wind bringeth forth rain ;  
And a backbiting tongue an angry countenance.
24. Better is it to dwell in a corner of a house-top,  
Than with a quarrelsome wife even in a large house.
25. As cold water to the thirsty soul,  
Are good tidings from a distant land.
26. As a muddy well, and a ruined spring,  
Is a righteous man cringing before the wicked.
27. It is not good to eat too much honey ;  
Nor glorious for men to search for their own glory.
28. As a city broken through, and without a wall,  
Is he who cannot restrain his spirit.

## CHAPTER XXVI.

1. As snow in summer, and as rain in harvest,  
So honour is not becoming to a fool.

20.—It is evident that there were different readings in this verse unknown to the School of the Masora. The reading of the Targum is: "He who strippeth the garment from his fellow-man on a cold day, is like him who poureth vinegar upon a wound, causing pain to the heart; as a moth the garment, and as a worm the wood, so the grief of a man gnaweth the heart." The Sept. have nearly the same reading. *Soda*.—"Nether," Greek, *nitron*. Not *saltpeter*, but either the *carbonate* or *sulphate of soda*. I think the Hebrew term "Nether" is best represented by *soda*.

24.—See Chap. xxi., v. 9.

27.—There is great obscurity in the latter part of this verse.

28.—*Is he*.—So is he continually exposed to danger.

2. Unsteady as the sparrow—as the flight of the swallow,  
Is a causeless curse ; it cometh not to pass.
3. A whip is for the horse, a bridle for the ass,  
And a rod for the back of fools.
4. Answer not a fool according to his folly,  
Lest thou also become like unto him.
5. Answer a fool according to his folly,  
Lest he be wise in his own eyes.
6. He who sendeth a message by the hand of a fool,  
Cutteth off the feet, and drinketh vexation.
7. As the raising of the legs by a lame man,  
Is a proverb in the mouth of fools.
8. As a precious stone confined among rubbish,  
Is honour given to a fool.
9. As a thorn taken up by the hand of a drunkard,  
Is a proverb in the mouth of fools.



5.—*Answer*.—Lay plainly and boldly before him, in such manner as the circumstances of the case require, the wickedness of his conduct, in order that you may effectually lower his presumptions.—Some versions read: “Answer a fool according to *thy wisdom*,” and this reading is adopted by Kenuicott. The reading of the Talmud is as our present text. See Shabbath, fol. 25.

6.—He who entrusteth a fool with a message might as well have cut off his own feet ; for he will have vexation and may be damage.

Hodgson’s rendering is worth consideration.—“Like one eager after plunder, but whose feet have been cut off, is he who committeth a dispatch to the hand of a fool.”

7.—As lameness is most apparent, when a person suffering under it attempts to move quickly, so is folly most conspicuous when its votary assumes the language of the wise.—The Targum: “Canst thou learn properly dancing from the lame? So canst thou learn a Proverb from a fool.” The commentators on this verse vary.

9.—*Of a drunkard*.—Is sure to inflict injury on himself, and may probably do so to others.

*He hireth*.—He employs fools and wicked men as agents to execute his will.—“There is no authority for our reading and translation, “and the versions afford very little satisfaction.” Dimock.—“Every “drunkard acts much the madman ; and the fool and the drunkard “are alike transgressors.” Boothroyd.—He alters the text and the division of the verse.

10. The great man terrifieth every one ;  
He hireth fools, he hireth transgressors.
11. As the dog returneth to his vomit,  
So a fool repeateth his folly.
12. Seest thou a man wise in his own eyes ?  
There is more hope of a fool than of him.
- .....
13. The sluggard saith : " There is a lion in the way ;  
There is a lion in the streets ! "
14. As the door turneth upon its hinges,  
So doth the sluggard upon his bed.
15. The slothful man dippeth his hand into the dish ;  
It wearieeth him to bring it back to his mouth.
16. The slothful is wiser in his own eyes,  
Than seven men who can give the wisest counsel.
- .....
17. As one who taketh hold of a dog by the ears,  
Is he who busily interfereth in another man's quarrel.
18. As one who for passtime  
Hurleth darts, arrows, and weapons of death,
19. Is the man who deceiveth his neighbour,  
And saith : " Am I not in sport ? "
20. Without wood the fire goeth out ;  
Where there is no talebearer contention ceaseth.
21. As coals are to burning embers, and wood to fire,  
Is a quarrelsome man to kindle contention.
22. The words of a talebearer are like dainties ;  
For they descend into the inmost parts.
23. As drossy silver laid over a potsherd,  
Are flattering lips and a wicked heart.
24. An enemy dissembleth with his lips,  
And layeth up deceit within him.
25. Although his voice be gracious trust him not ;  
For there are seven abominations in his heart.

13.—See Chap. xxii., v. 13, and note.

14.—*Turneth*.—Backward and forward, without leaving them.

15.—See Chap. xix., v. 24, and notes.

25.—" For he is *full* of abominations in his heart." Durell.

26. Though his hatred is concealed by deceit,  
His wickedness will be disclosed before the assembly.
27. He who diggeth a pit shall fall into it;  
And upon him who rolleth a stone it shall return.
28. A lying tongue hateth those who are wounded by it;  
And a flattering mouth causeth ruin.

## CHAPTER XXVII.

1. Boast not thyself of the morrow;  
For thou knowest not what a day may bring forth.
2. Let another man praise thee, and not thine own mouth;  
A stranger, and not thine own lips.
3. A stone is heavy, and the sand is burdensome;  
But a fool's indignation is heavier than them both.
4. Wrath is cruel, and anger impetuous;  
But who can stand before jealousy?
5. Better is open rebuke  
Than love kept concealed.
6. Faithful are the wounds of a friend;  
But the kisses of an enemy are treacherous.
7. He who is fed to the full trampleth on the honeycomb;  
But to the famished any bitter thing is sweet.
8. As a bird which wandereth from its nest,  
Is the man who wandereth from his own place.

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26.—*His wickedness*.—The time will soon arrive when his real disposition will be publicly known.—Durell: "He that covered hatred with deceit."

27.—*Rolleth*.—He who raiseth a stone to a high place, in order that it may fall from thence and overwhelm others.—Jarchi, quoting from the Midrash, says this verse refers to Abimelech, who slew his seventy brethren upon one stone, and afterwards was *himself slain by a stone*. (JUDGES, Chap. ix).

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4.—*Jealousy*.—The Proverbialists say: "Three cases are irremediable. I.—Poverty combined with idleness. II.—Hatred arising from "jealousy. III.—Illness accompanied with old age." See Meiri, also, "The Prince and the Dervish, Chap. xxv."

5.—*Concealed*.—Which, although it may exist in the heart, does not show itself by honestly reproving a friend for any misconduct should occasion require it.

8.—Eichel: "So is the man who is obliged to leave his fatherland."

9. Oil and perfumes gladden the heart ;  
So the sweetness of a man's friend by hearty counsel.
10. Forsake not thy friend nor the friend of thy father ;  
So shalt thou not have to go in thy brother's house  
In the day of thy calamity ;  
Better is a near neighbour than a brother afar off.
11. Be wise, my son ; so shalt thou gladden my heart ;  
That I may answer him who reproacheth me.
12. The prudent man seeth evil and hideth himself ;  
The simple transgress and are punished.
13. Take his garment, for he was surety for a stranger ;  
And take a pledge of him for a strange woman.
14. He who rising early with a loud voice blessed another,  
To him it shall be counted as a curse.
15. A continued dropping in a very rain day,  
And a quarrelsome wife are alike ;
16. He who would restrain her,  
As well might he restrain the wind,  
Or conceal the oil which is upon his right hand.
17. As iron is sharpened by iron,  
So a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend.
18. He who protecteth the fig tree shall eat its fruit ;  
So he who guardeth his master shall be honoured.
19. As water sheweth the face to the face,  
So doth the heart the man to the man.

12.—See Chap. xxii., v. 3, and note.

13.—See Chap. xx., v. 16, and note.

14.—*Rising early.*—Thus showing great assiduity.

*To him.*—For his vehemence and apparent earnestness, he will be suspected of having a sinister motive, in thus publishing another's goodness.

15.—See Chap. xix., v. 13.

16.—A man might as well attempt to control the wind, and prevent anyone from perceiving the perfumes upon his hand, as hope to check the violence of her temper, and keep her within the bounds of moderation.

19.—This is the true sense of the text as it stands. The versions read differently. The Vulg. : "So the heart of man is known to the prudent." The Sept., Syr., and Arab. read for "Mayim" *water*, "Damim" *alike*, and the Targum supplies it with the negative in both hemistichs. "As face is not like to face, so the heart of man is not alike."

20. The grave and the regions of the dead cannot be filled;  
So the eyes of man are insatiable.
21. The refining pot is for silver, and the furnace for gold;  
So a man is tried through that which he praiseth.
22. Though thou beatest a fool in a mortar,  
Amongst bruised wheat with a pestle,  
His folly will not depart from him.
23. Know accurately the state of thy flocks,  
And consider thy herds;
24. For riches abide not for ever,  
Nor a crown through succeeding generations.
25. When the hay is gone, and the tender grass appeareth,  
And the herbage of the mountains is gathered in;
26. Thou wilt have lambs for thy clothing;  
And goats for the price of thy field;
27. And milk of goats sufficient for thy food,  
For the food of thy household,  
And maintainance for thy maidens.

## CHAPTER XXVIII.

1. The wicked flee when there is no pursuer;  
But the righteous have the courage of the lion.
2. Through the transgression of a land many are its rulers;  
But by a man of understanding and knowledge its  
stability is prolonged.
3. A needy man in authority who oppreseth the poor,  
Is like a sweeping rain which leaveth no food.
4. They who forsake the law praise the wicked;  
But they who keep the law contend with them.
5. Wicked men do not regard justice;  
But they who seek the Lord regard it in all things.

21.—I have followed the opinion of Aben Ezra.

22.—Hodgson: "Though thou should'st chastise a fool in the grinding house, amidst the workers at the grist."—Dimock: "Amongst those bruising out the grain."

1.—Hebrew MSS. read in the singular "Nos." and "Tzadik." This correction would greatly improve the text.—I have adopted the plural.—2, Dimock: "But by a prudent man order shall be restored."

2.—*Many*.—This is remarkably exemplified in the history of the kings of Israel.

6. Better is a poor man who walketh in integrity,  
Than he who is perverse in his ways though he be rich.
7. He who observeth instruction is a prudent son ;  
But the companion of gluttons bringeth shame upon  
his father.
8. He who increaseth his substance by usury and  
unjust gain,  
Collecteth it for him who is kind to the poor.
9. He who turneth his ear from hearing the law,  
Even his prayer is an abomination.
10. He who causeth the upright to stray into the path  
of evil,  
Shall fall himself into his own pit ;  
But the righteous shall enjoy prosperity.
11. The rich man is wise in his own eyes ;  
But a poor man of understanding searcheth him out.
12. When the just triumph there is much rejoicing ;  
But when the wicked are exalted men hide themselves.
13. He who concealeth his sins will not flourish ;  
But he who confesseth and forsaketh them shall find  
mercy.
14. Happy is the man who feareth always ;  
But he who hardeneth his heart shall fall into calamity.
15. As a roaring lion and a hungry bear,  
Is a wicked ruler over a needy people.
16. The prince void of sense aboundeth in oppressions ;  
But he who hateth unjust gain shall prolong his days.
17. A man oppressed with the guilt of shedding blood,  
Fleeth into a pit that he may not be taken.

6.—See Chap. xix., v. 1, and note.

11.—*Searcheth him out.*—Forms a true estimate of his character.—  
HUNT: "But a poor wise man will expose him."

12.—*Hide themselves.*—Good men find it necessary to withdraw  
themselves from the violence of the wicked. See verse 28.

15.—*Over a needy people.*—Who with scanty means are obliged to  
submit to his oppressive exactions and cruelty.

17.—*Fleeth.*—Pursued by the terrors of an evil conscience, and by  
the avenger of blood, he falls into one danger in the attempt to avoid  
another.—The Jewish polity authorised the nearest relative of a person  
murdered to pursue the murderer and take summary vengeance upon  
him for the blood which he has shed.

18. He who walketh in integrity shall be safe ;  
But he who is perverse in his ways shall fall at once.
19. He who tilleth his land shall be satisfied with bread ;  
But he who followeth after vain things shall have  
poverty enough.
20. A faithful man hath abundance of blessings ;  
But he who hasteth to be rich will not be held guiltless.
21. To have respect of persons is not good ;  
Nor that a man should transgress for a morsel of bread.
22. A man of evil eye hasteth after wealth ;  
And considereth not that want will come upon him.
23. He who rebuketh a man after my example findeth  
more favour,  
Than he who flattereth with the tongue.
24. He who robbeth his father and his mother,  
And saith : " It is no transgression,"  
Is the companion of a destroyer.
25. He who hath a covetous soul inciteth contention ;  
But he who trusteth in the Lord shall enjoy abundance.
26. He who trusteth in his own heart is a fool ;  
But he who walketh wisely will be rescued.
27. He who giveth to the poor shall not want ;  
But he who averteth his eyes shall have many curses.
28. When the wicked are exalted men hide themselves ;  
But when they perish the righteous increase.

## CHAPTER XXIX.

1. A man who being often reprov'd hardeneth his neck,  
In a moment shall he be crushed without remedy.
  2. When the righteous increase the people rejoice ;  
But when a wicked man ruleth the people groan.
- 
- 19.—See Chap. xii., v. 11.
- 21.—*To have respect of persons, i.e.*—In judgment.—This is a repetition of Chap. xxiv., v. 23. Here the word "Bamishpot," in judgment, is omitted.
- 26.—*Is a fool.*—And will fall into difficulty and danger.  
*Rescued.*—From danger.
- 27.—*Averteth his eyes.*—He who refuses to regard the distress of the needy.
- 28.—*Hide themselves.* See v. 12.

3. He who loveth wisdom gladdeneth his father ;  
But the companion of harlots wasteth his substance.
4. A king establisheth a land by equity ;  
But he who receiveth gifts overthroweth it.
5. A man who flattereth his neighbour,  
Spreadeth a net for his footsteps.
6. In the transgression of a wicked man there is a snare ;  
But the righteous shall sing aloud and rejoice.
7. The righteous man careth for the cause of the poor ;  
But the wicked will not regard it.
8. Scoffers kindle a city into a flame ;  
But wise men turn away wrath.
9. When a wise man argueth with a fool,  
Whether in anger or pleasantly, yet there will be no rest.
10. The bloodthirsty hate an honest man ;  
But the upright seek his esteem.
11. A fool uttereth all his mind ;  
But a wise man keepeth it back in silence.
12. A ruler who listeneth to falsehood,  
All his ministers become wicked.
13. The poor and the oppressor meet together ;  
The Lord enlighteneth the eyes of them both.
14. A king who faithfully judgeth the poor,  
Establisheth his throne for ever.
15. The rod and rebuke give wisdom ;  
But a child left to himself bringeth shame to his mother.



4.—*Who receiveth gifts.*—Who will not dispense justice without exacting large presents from those persons who address themselves to him for it.—See the Talmud, Sanhedrin, fol. 7.—The Targum, Syr., Sept., and Arab. read “Tarmith,” *the man of deceit*. This reading is an improvement, for the word “Teroomoth” signifies *gifts* offered with a *religious view* ; but is never used in a *bad* sense for *bribes*.

7.—Aben Ezra considers the word “Daath” as a noun, used here in a *forensic* sense. “But the wicked will not regard his suit.” I think we should consider it as *idiomatical*, and so I have translated.

9.—*No rest.*—No conviction will be produced upon the fool, but he will go on disputing.

11.—See Chap. xiv., v. 33.

13.—See Chap. xxii., v. 2.

16. When the wicked increase, offences increase;  
But the righteous shall witness their fall.
17. Chastise thy son and he will comfort thee;  
Yea, he will give delight to thy soul.
18. Where there is no vision the people become disorderly;  
But happy are they who keep the law.
19. A slave will not be corrected by words;  
Although he may understand, yet he will not obey.
20. Seest thou a man who is hasty in his words?  
There is more hope of a fool than of him.
21. He who indulgeth his slave from his youth,  
Will find him in the end behaving as his offspring.
22. A passionate man exciteth contention;  
And he who is prone to wrath committeth many offences.
23. A man's pride will bring him down;  
But he who is of a humble spirit will obtain honour.
24. He who shareth with a thief hateth himself;  
He heareth the adjuration but will not confess.
25. The fear of man will prove a snare;  
But he who trusteth in the Lord shall be exalted.
26. Many seek the favour of a ruler;  
But the sentence of a man is from the Lord.
27. The unjust man is an abomination to the righteous;  
And the upright in his way is an abomination to the wicked.

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16.—Hodgson: "When the wicked are exalted vice is promoted."

18.—*Where there is no vision*.—Where there are no authorised instructors.—Reference is here made to the good effects produced by the teaching of the prophets—raised up from time to time amongst the Jews—upon the corrupted morals of their countrymen.

20.—See Chap. xxvi., v. 12.

21.—*Indulgeth*.—He who treats his slave with greater tenderness than is suited to his condition, will find that he will presume upon the kindness of his master, and conduct himself in a manner utterly unsuited to his station in life.—Hunt: "He that is indulged from a child shall be a servant, and his latter end shall be miserable."

24.—*Adjuration*.—When evidences were wanted, the court ordered a proclamation to be issued, that anyone knowing anything concerning the case should come forward and declare it in court. A public adjuration was joined to it in case anyone should neglect or refuse to give his evidence.

## CHAPTER XXX.

1. THE WORDS OF AGUR, THE SON OF JAKEH;  
THE DIVINE SAYINGS,  
WHICH THAT MAN SPOKE TO ITHIEL,  
EVEN TO ITHIEL AND UCAL.
  2. Surely, I am more ignorant than anyone,  
Nor have I the understanding of a man ;
  3. Neither have I learned wisdom,  
Nor do I comprehend the knowledge of the Most Holy.
  4. Who hath ascended up to heaven or descended ?  
Who hath inclosed the wind in his hands ?  
Who hath bound up the waters in a garment ?  
Who hath established all the ends of the earth ?  
What is his name ? and what the name of his son ?  
If thou knowest ?
  5. Every word of God is pure ;  
He is a shield to those who trust in him.
  6. Add thou not unto His word lest He rebuke thee,  
And thou be found a liar.
- .....
7. Two things have I asked of Thee,  
Withhold them not from me while I live.
  8. Remove far from me vanity and falsehood ;  
Give me neither poverty nor riches ;  
Feed me but with food sufficient for me ;

2.—In this and the four following verses are contained the answer of Agur to his pupils, who, it would seem, had ascribed to their teacher an extraordinary degree of capacity and knowledge.—It is observable that the whole of this Chapter consists of a series of answers given by this preceptor to the inquiries of his pupils, and the answer in any case will readily suggest the kind of question which produced it.

3.—Hodgson: “And though in science I have had no instruction, yet of holy things have I knowledge.”

7.—*While I live*.—Hebrew: “Before I die.”

9.—Crime may often be the effect of depravity, but nine times in ten it is the consequence of want, and of the terror caused by the hard consequences of poverty.

9. Lest I be filled to the full and deny Thee,  
And say: "Who is the Lord?"  
Or lest I come to poverty, and steal,  
And swear falsely by the name of my God.
  10. Accuse not a servant to his master,  
Lest he curse thee and thou suffer for thy guilt.
  11. There is a race who curse their father,  
And bless not their mother;
  12. A race that are pure in their own eyes,  
And yet are not washed from their filthiness;
  13. A race, how lofty are their eyes,  
And their eye-lids how are they lifted up!
  14. A race whose teeth are as swords,  
And their jaw-teeth as knives;  
To devour the poor from off the earth,  
And the needy from among men.
- .....
15. Alukah hath two daughters,  
Who cry "Give, give."  
There are three things which are never satisfied,  
Yea four which never say: "It is enough."
  16. The grave, and the barren womb;  
The earth which is not saturated with water;  
And the fire which doth not say: "It is enough."
  17. The eye which holdeth a father in derision,  
And disdaineth to obey a mother,  
The ravens of the brook shall pick it out,  
And young eagles shall devour it.
  18. There are three things too wonderful for me,  
Yea four which I understand not.
  19. The way of an eagle through the air;  
The way of a serpent upon a rock;  
The way of a ship through the midst of the sea;  
And the way of a man with a young woman.

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15.—This proverb is intended to point out the insatiable desire in which man indulges. The images employed for this purpose are amongst the most striking which nature can furnish.—"*Alukah*," the "horselach," is *lust*, its two daughters *avarice* and *ambition*," CALMET.

20. Such also is the way of an adulterous woman ;
 She eateth and wipeth her mouth,
 And saith : " I have done no iniquity."

21. Under three things is a land disquieted,
 And four it cannot bear.
 22. Under a slave when he reigneth ;
 Under an impious man when he is filled with food ;
 23. Under an odious woman when she becometh married ;
 And under a maid who dispossesseth her mistress.

24. Four things are little upon earth,
 Yet they are exceedingly wise.
 25. The ants are a race not strong,
 Yet they prepare in the summer their food.
 26. The jerboas are a race not mighty,
 Yet they make their houses in the rocks.
 27. The locusts have no king,
 Yet they go all forth in order.
 28. The lizard taketh hold with its hands,
 And it is in the palaces of kings.

29. Three things are stately in their step,
 Yea four stately in their walk.
 30. A lion, mightiest of beasts,
 Which turneth not away for anything.
 31. A wrestler, and a he-goat ;
 And a king against whom no one can stand.

24.—*Four things*.—They rank amongst the least and most inconsiderable of terrestrial creatures. The sacred writer refers to these in order to show that they are gifted with instincts suited to compensate for their natural deficiency in strength.

28.—*Taketh hold*.—This small animal has the power of supporting itself by its feet, upon the walls and ceilings of houses.

And it is.—In pursuit of its prey—flies and spiders—it is permitted to enter even the palaces of kings.

32. If thou hast acted foolishly by exalting thyself.
Or if thou hast devised mischief,
Lay thy hand upon thy mouth ;
33. For as the pressing of milk bringeth forth butter,
And the pressing of the nose bringeth forth blood,
So the provoking of wrath bringeth forth strife.

CHAPTER XXXI.

1. THE WORDS OF KING LEMUEL.
THE DIVINE SAYINGS WHICH HIS MOTHER TAUGHT HIM.
2. O, my son, son of my womb!
O, thou son of my vows!
3. Give not thy strength unto women,
Nor thy ways to that which destroyeth kings.
4. It is not for kings, O Lemuel—
Not for kings to drink wine,
Nor for rulers to desire strong drink ;
5. Lest they drink and forget that which is decreed,
And pervert the cause of any of the afflicted.
6. Give strong drink to him who is ready to perish,
And wine to those who are of a bitter spirit.
7. Let him drink that he may forget his poverty,
And remember his misery no more.
8. Open thy mouth for the dumb,
In the cause of all mortals.
9. Open thy mouth, judge righteously,
And plead the cause of the poor and needy.

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32.—To shew a sacred reverence and veneration, the Indians rise up, uncover their heads, and lay their right hand on their mouth.—BARTOLOMES, by JOHNSTON, p. 373.

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2.—This verse contains the passionate exclamations of a mother, addressed to a beloved son, for whose future care she is most anxious.
Son of my womb.—Endeared to me, as being my own offspring and not my child merely by adoption.

Son of my vows.—Granted to me by my prayers.

3.—*Nor thy ways.*—Houbigant from the Targum and the Vulg. proposes to read: "Nor thy riches to the daughters of kings."

10. Who is he that hath found a virtuous wife?
Her value is far above pearls.
11. The heart of her husband trusteth in her,
And he is in no want of household substance.
12. She doeth good unto him and not evil,
All the days of her life.
13. She seeketh wool and flax,
And worketh cheerfully with her hands.
14. She is like the merchant's ship,
She bringeth in her provision from afar.
15. She ariseth while it is yet night,
And giveth food to her family,
And a portion to her maidens.
16. She considereth about a field, and buyeth it;
With the fruit of her hands she planteth a vineyard.
17. She girdeth her loins with strength,
And she nerveth her arms.
18. She is sensible that her traffic is profitable,
Her lamp goeth not out at night.
19. She putteth forth her hands to the spindle,
And in her palms she holdeth the distaff.
20. She stretcheth out her hand to the poor;
Yea, she reacheth forth her hands to the needy.
21. She feareth not for her family by reason of the snow,
For all her family are clothed with double garments.
22. She maketh for herself bed-coverings;
Of cotton, and Tyrian purple is her clothing.

10.—The remainder of this Chapter is arranged in the Hebrew, alphabetically, and as descriptive of a virtuous wife, furnishes useful hints and gives some ideas of the manners of the Israelites.

11.—*Trusteth in her*.—He leaves in full confidence all the concerns of his family to her care and management.

17.—She exerts herself with energy in her various vocations.—The expressions used here are figurative.

18.—*Her lamp*.—She carries on her occupations after the close of the day.

21.—*Double garments*.—*Scarlet* is here improper.

22.—“In Barbary, the women alone are still employed in manufacturing their bykes or blankets, as we should call them; they use not the shuttle, but conduct every thread of the wool with their fingers.” SHAW'S TRAVELS, p. 224.

23. Her husband is known at the gates,
When he sitteth with the elders of the land.
24. She maketh linen and selleth it,
And girdles she disposeth of to the merchant.
25. Strength and comeliness are her clothing,
She rejoiceth at the days which are to come.
26. Her mouth she openeth with wisdom,
And the law of kindness is upon her tongue.
27. She looketh well to the conduct of her family,
And eateth not the bread of idleness.
28. Her children rise up, and bless her,
Her husband, and he praiseth her : [saying]
29. "Many daughters have been virtuous ;
"But thou hast excelled them all."
-
30. Favour is deceitful, and beauty is vain ;
A woman that feareth the Lord she will be praised.
31. Give ye unto her of the fruit of her hands,
And let her deeds praise her in the gates !
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28.—*Her husband is known.*—Therefore she dresses herself according to his position.

24.—"The Egyptian women used to deal in buying and selling things, woven of silk, gold, and silver ; of pure silk, of cotton and thread, or simple linen cloth, whether made in the country or imported." MAILLET, Lett. xi., p. 134.

27.—"And idleness eateth no bread with her." DR. FRIEDLAENDER.

29.—This must be supposed to be said by the husband. The word *saying* ought therefore to precede this verse.

ERRATA.

Chap. ix., v. 12.—Thou alone *shall*, read: "Shalt."



VARIOUS READINGS OF THE TALMUD.



CHAP. III., v. 16. ובשמאלה BABA BATHRA. Fol. 56.

„ VI., „ 3. והתרפס BABA METZIA. „ 115.

„ „ „ 6. אצל נמלה CHOLIN. „ 57.

„ XI., „ 25. יורה SANHEDRIN. „ 92.

Undoubtedly the true reading and confirmed by Hebrew MSS.

„ XIV., „ 1. תהרסנה SANHEDRIN. „ 110.

Undoubtedly the true reading.

„ XXIV., 16. ורשע יפול באחת SANHEDRIN. 7.

A most important various reading.

„ „ „ 23. ועם SOTA. „ 23.

Confirmed by Hebrew MSS.

„ XXVI., 2. לא תבא MACCOTII. „ 11.

The TALMUD adopts the Kethiv.



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